

BURBANK /
DEL MONTE

NEIGHBORHOOD
IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Improvement Plan Concepts

Improvement Plan Concepts

During the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative process, community members and Neighborhood Advisory Committee members identified many ways to resolve neighborhood issues and create a more livable and attractive community. This chapter describes the major physical components and community programs that together make up the community's plan for achieving the Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood vision.

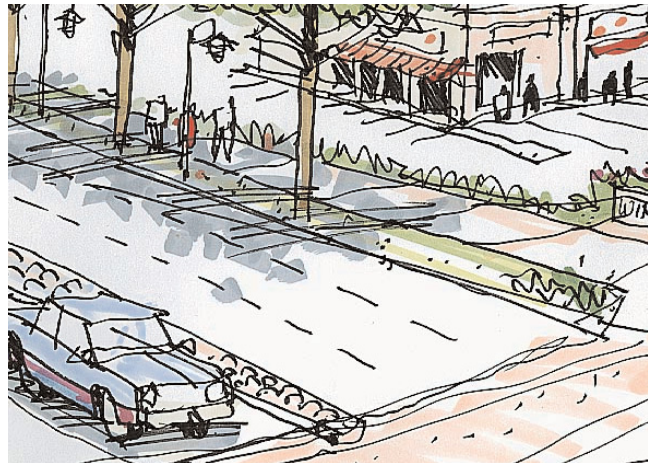
Improvement concepts are physical design or programmatic solutions used to address neighborhood problems and issues on a schematic level. In addition to these concepts, *strategic actions* are an integral part of the *Plan*.

Strategic actions are the more specific methods of implementing community improvements. These are detailed in the *Strategic Action Plan* section of this document.

The neighborhood improvement concepts are based on the goals and objectives identified by community members through various NAC meetings and community workshops. These concepts address circulation, transportation, economic development, and detail the major ideas for improving the physical appearance and image of the neighborhood, as well as improving programs and services.

The improvement concepts are organized into the following major categories:

- Parks and Open Space;
- Community Facilities;
- Circulation/Transportation;
- Economic Development;
- Housing Revitalization;
- Neighborhood Beautification; and
- Programs and Services.



A major improvement concept involves making circulation and transportation more efficient in the neighborhood.



Access to parks and community facilities are high priorities for residents.



Neighborhood beautification is an important part of the Burbank/Del Monte vision.

Parks and Open Space describes the overall design concept for creating a network of open spaces in the neighborhood, and identifies potential parks locations. The *Community Facilities* concept proposes strategies for bridging the gap in neighborhood meeting and gathering places. *Circulation and Transportation* includes design ideas for traffic calming, improved traffic flow, pedestrian connections, and strategies for improved parking. The *Economic Development* concept is comprised of suggestions for upgrading Burbank/Del Monte's commercial corridors, West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue. The concept for *Housing Revitalization* outlines means for improving the overall condition and appearance of housing in the neighborhood. The *Neighborhood Beautification* concept includes strategies for improving landscaping, highlighting historic character and intensifying neighborhood clean-up efforts. The concept for *Programs and Services* highlights the need to improve or expand programs and services in the neighborhood.



The economic development concept seeks to revitalize Burbank/Del Monte's commercial corridors.

Parks and Open Space

Burbank/Del Monte is an older, developed neighborhood with very little open space. Residents currently rely on nearby schools to provide outdoor recreational space, such as the Luther Burbank Elementary School, San José City College and the Sherman Oaks Community Charter School (just south of the Burbank/Del Monte Strong Neighborhoods Initiative planning area). These existing resources are difficult to access for many residents since they are located on the outskirts of the neighborhood. Interstate-280 and Southwest Expressway bisect the area, adding to the challenge of reaching these destinations by foot or by bicycle.



Youth enjoying the field at San José City College.

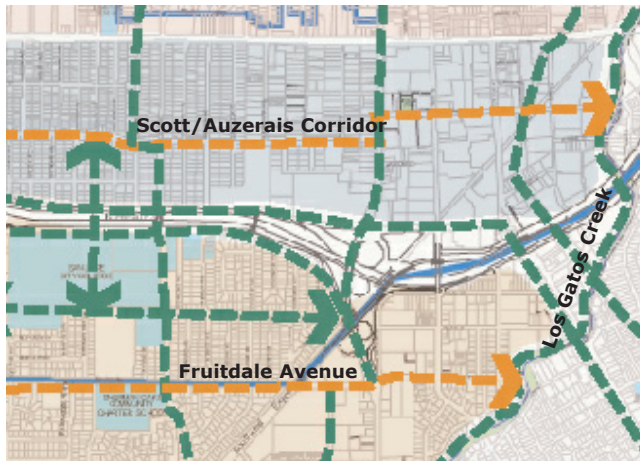
Service goals set by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services in San José's 20-year Strategic Plan for Parks, Community Facilities and Programs, show that Council District 6 as a whole needs an additional 70.54 acres of neighborhood/community serving parkland by 2020.¹ The Burbank/Del Monte Strong Neighborhoods Initiative planning area is roughly just a quarter of the size of the entire Council District, however, this area is particularly underserved by parks and open space.

As a long-term goal, residents would like to develop a network of parks, pocket parks and community gardens where possible throughout the neighborhood.

Developing these open space resources hand-in-hand with pedestrian improvements will better link the neighborhood together physically, connecting pedestrians to larger open space resources and destinations on the outskirts of the neighborhood (see figure 4). As part of the neighborhood improvement concept, Scott/Auzerais is envisioned as the primary pedestrian link through the neighborhood, Fruitdale Avenue is envisioned as a secondary pedestrian link, and West San Carlos Street is envisioned as a major east/west

¹ City of San José, Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services. Greenprint for Parks and Community Facilities and Programs: A 20-Year Strategic Plan. San José, CA, 2000.

commercial pedestrian linkage. These are also the focal corridors for park development. Although, park development is desired anywhere it's feasible in the neighborhood, a top priority is acquiring sites that work in conjunction with the overall vision for a pedestrian-oriented network connecting pocket parks to larger community resources and key destinations (see top priority action: *Complete development of Buena Vista Tot Lot and Acquire parcel at Scott and Clifton...* in the *Strategic Action Plan* section of this document).



Pedestrian-oriented network connecting pocket parks to community resources - Primary residential pocket park-lined links: the Scott/Auzerais corridor & Fruitdale Avenue.

Developing a network of parks in a neighborhood with very limited open space will be a challenge that will require many years of commitment. It is however, an important long-term goal to begin working towards one step at a time. The critical need for open space in the Burbank/Del Monte area is evidenced by residents' strong commitment to park-related improvement priorities. A majority of community members' top priorities are related to park development through the creation of an open space framework (see top priority actions in the *Strategic Action Plan* section of this document).

Creating this open space framework involves three primary strategies:

- Acquire lots in the neighborhood as land becomes available, to develop residential parks or pocket parks (especially along proposed residential pedestrian corridors, Scott/Auzerais and Fruitdale);
- Build an inventory of underutilized or unfavorable commercial sites (such as used car lots and adult businesses) and focus efforts on acquiring these lots as opportunities arise; and
- Collaborate with developers, landowners and business owners to integrate small transit-oriented parks/plazas into redevelopment projects on commercial corridors.

The neighborhood improvement concept features three important east-west corridors that would serve as pedestrian-friendly, park-lined links through the neighborhood: Scott Street/Auzerais

Avenue, West San Carlos Street, and Fruitdale Avenue. The character of pocket parks along these corridors would reflect either the commercial nature of the street or the residential quality, depending on their context.

Concentrating pocket park development along corridors where pedestrian and bicycle improvements are planned will not only create nearby accessible parks where neighbors could gather, but will also provide links to the larger open space and community resources on the edges of the neighborhood, such as Rosegarden Park and Library, Lincoln Senior High School, the planned Midtown parks, San José City College, Sherman Oaks Community Charter School, the planned park at St. Elizabeth and Curci, and the Los Gatos Creek Trail network.

Proposed neighborhood park and urban transit-oriented park locations indicated in figure 4: *Parks, Community Facilities & Neighborhood Connections* are conceptual and are intended to demonstrate a desired rhythm or pattern of parks along these corridors. Actual park locations would be determined by opportunities that arise to purchase land and/or collaborate with business owners and landowners.

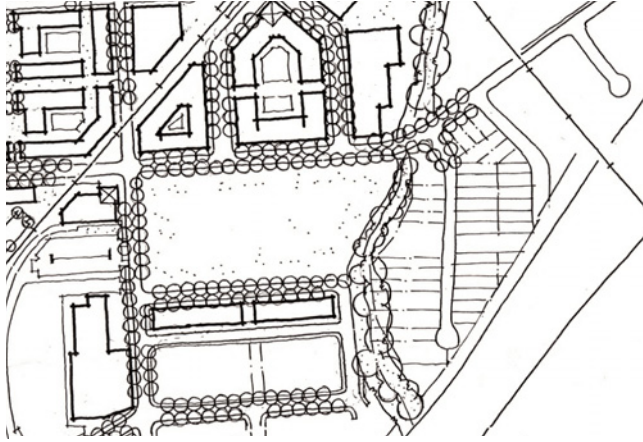
Scott Street/Auzerais Avenue

Scott Street/Auzerais Avenue would serve as the primary residential east-west pedestrian link through the center of the neighborhood. Pocket parks along this major pedestrian-friendly link would be of a more residential nature, with children's play areas, grass, community gardens and small gathering places where neighbors could meet.

Two parks are already planned along this corridor: O'Connor Park (a developer-



Artist's rendering of a potential residential pocket park.



Conceptual plan for new public neighborhood park at Auzerais Ave. adjacent to Los Gatos Creek at the old Del Monte site.

dedicated park), and the Buena Vista Tot Lot (a neighborhood-initiated park project). As a first step in implementing park improvements along this corridor, development of these planned parks should be finalized. In order to complete the Buena Vista Tot Lot, additional funding is required. Securing sufficient resources to complete this park is a top priority for residents. Another high priority action is to acquire the opportunity site at Scott Street and Clifton Avenue to develop as a residential pocket park (see top priority action: *Complete development of Buena Vista Tot Lot and Acquire*

parcel at Scott and Clifton... in the *Strategic Action Plan* section of this document).



Example: Artistic garden structure.



Example: Public art display at a community garden.

Securing space at the end of Auzerais Avenue on the old Del Monte site along the Los Gatos Creek Trail is an equally important neighborhood improvement goal (see top priority action: *Develop a new neighborhood park along Los Gatos Creek at Auzerais Avenue...* in the *Strategic Action Plan* section of this document). The site is bordered on the west by Sunol Street, on the east by the creek, and north and south by Auzerais Avenue and West Home Street, respectively. This 4–5 acre site has the capacity to serve as a major park resource for the neighborhood, possibly even in combination with a neighborhood center. This potential park would serve as the terminus of the envisioned Scott/Auzerais primary pedestrian corridor. In the event that the Del Monte site is developed, the community may be able to develop a park as part of a park dedication requirement. All opportunities to purchase part of this site or collaborate with developers to integrate a community park into the site should be actively pursued.

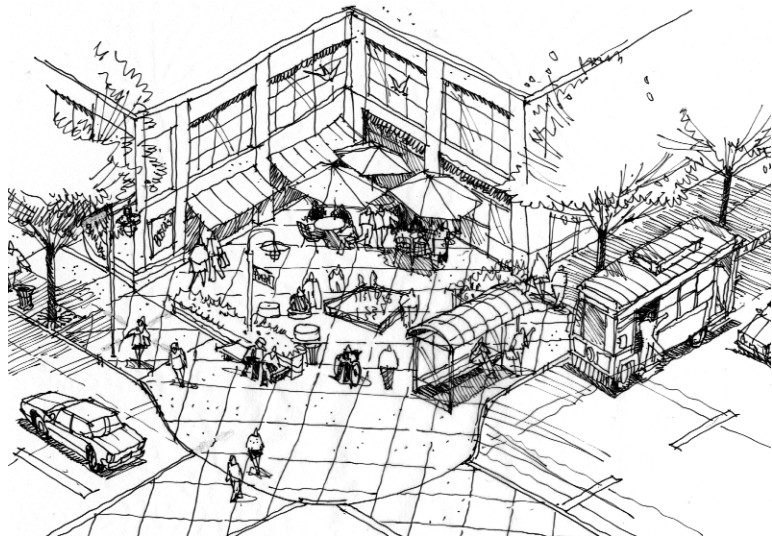
Residents also suggested a site just east of Los Gatos Creek in the Hannah-Gregory neighborhood, as a promising site to consider for a community garden. Community gardens could also serve as poten-

tial locations to display public art. Garden gates, sculpture, seating and artistic structures provide opportunities for creative art work.

Neighborhood associations should work with the San José Redevelopment Agency to identify additional residential pocket park locations (For example, lots along Scott/Auzerais with older, dilapidated housing may provide opportunities for acquisition). Working with a landscape architect or urban designer to develop pocket park prototypes of various sizes would be beneficial in demonstrating a range of potential park components and characters for potential sites. Park design concepts should be finalized with the participation of neighborhood associations and other stakeholders. Matching grant programs or *sweat equity* programs (where neighbors help build a park for a savings) could also help to set neighborhood park development in motion.

West San Carlos Street

West San Carlos Street would serve as a commercially-oriented transit spine with small urban parks or plazas (500–2,000 square feet each) associated with transit stops. Small transit-oriented parks could include seating, information kiosks, newspaper stands, water features, public art, special hardscape elements, and accent landscaping. These urban parks should be located at key intersections along the boulevard, such as near Luther Burbank Elementary School, at Leigh Avenue (adjacent to the new shopping center), at Bascom Avenue, Race Street, and at Sunol Street (adjacent to the future transit stop and the Del Monte site).



Artist's rendering of a potential transit-oriented pocket park/commercial plaza.

Building an inventory of underutilized or unfavorable commercial sites (such as used car lots and adult businesses) along West San Carlos Street, and focusing efforts on acquiring these lots as opportunities arise is a constructive first step toward developing transit parks. The West San Carlos Business Association and the Redevelopment Agency should take the lead in seeking opportunities to work with developers and property owners to include small, transit-oriented parks or commercial plazas as part of new development projects.

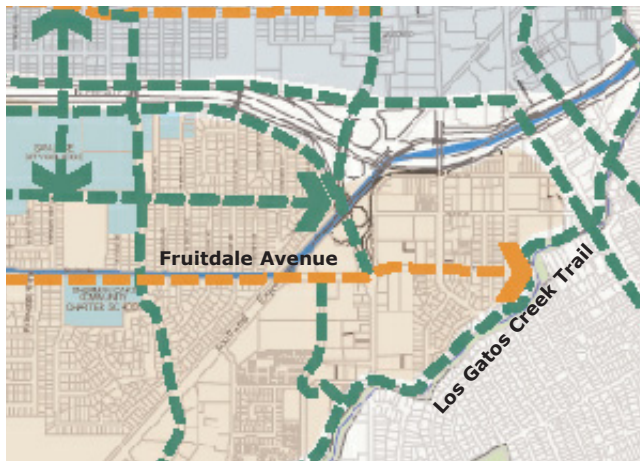


Fruitdale should connect to the Los Gatos Creek Trail.

Fruitdale Avenue

Fruitdale Avenue, the southernmost, east-west corridor in the neighborhood provides access to a number of open space resources, such as San José City College (and the planned multi-use recreation facility/community center), Sherman Oaks Community Charter School, the Los Gatos Creek park chain, and nearby access to the planned park at St. Elizabeth/Curci. Connecting the end of Fruitdale Avenue with the Los Gatos Creek Trail would provide the Sherman Oaks neighborhood and many Burbank/Del Monte resi-

dents access to the Auzerai/Del Monte site (where a neighborhood park is proposed), as well as the whole Downtown area chain of parks and open spaces. Looking for further opportunities to develop parks along Fruitdale Avenue will strengthen this corridor in the parks network.



Continue pocket park and pedestrian/bicycle improvements along Fruitdale Avenue to connect to the Los Gatos Creek Trail.

A strategic open space addition would be a transit-oriented pocket park associated with the future Vasona Corridor Light Rail transit stop at the proposed Kmart development site on the corner of Southwest Expressway and Fruitdale Avenue.

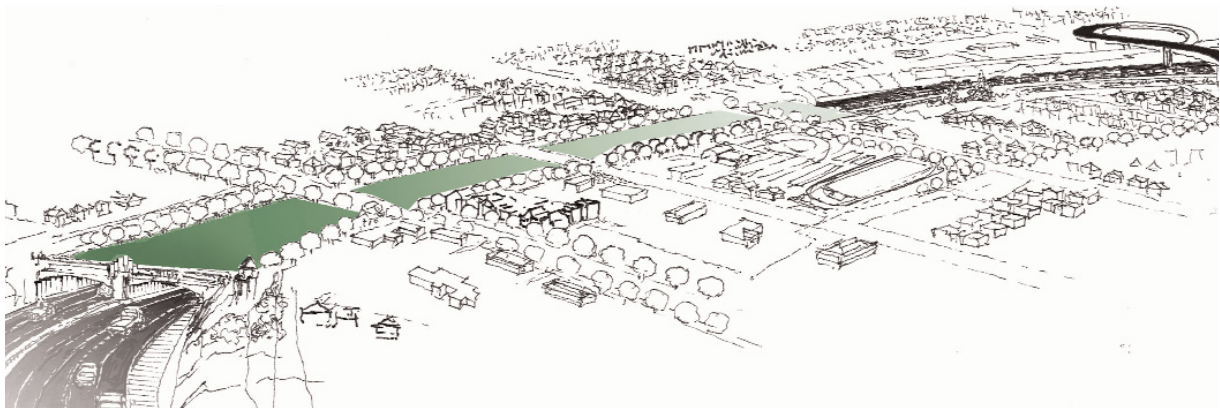
Working collaboratively, the City and Campbell School District may be able to integrate a small pocket park, or upgrade/develop a more significant park space at Sherman Oaks Community Charter School

for the benefit of the entire community. One area near Sherman Oaks Community Charter School that Campbell School District has expressed interest in making more inviting and attractive is a space in front of the school, between two existing parking lots. Opportunities to explore joint-park projects here or in other areas around the school, by working collaboratively with the District, the City, and residents, should be explored.

Additionally, partnering with San José City College to provide the security necessary to extend the hours the running track is open to the public will make the track a more valuable community resource. Because of the high quality surfacing material used on the new world-class running track, it is especially critical that the community shares in protecting this unique resource.

Interstate-280 “Freeway Park” Development Opportunity

A major concept for adding additional open space to the neighborhood is to explore the use of “air rights” above Interstate-280 (see top priority action: *Conduct a feasibility study for developing a “freeway park”*...in the *Strategic Action Plan* section of this document). The “air rights” refer to the space above the existing Interstate 280 right-of-way, which is generally controlled by the State of California.



Aerial sketch of conceptual freeway park.



Freeway Park, Seattle, WA.



Freeway Park and convention center, Seattle, WA.

In this concept, existing highway lanes and access ramps would remain, and the space above the travel lanes would be acquired for use primarily as public park space. This would involve the construction of a deck above the recessed portions of Interstate-280.

This type of development has been successfully completed in other cities; the most notable example is perhaps Seattle's Freeway Park, designed in the 1970s by prominent landscape architect, Lawrence Halprin. Seattle's Freeway Park supports a park and major Downtown convention center. The City of San Diego is currently in the process of constructing the Teralta neighborhood park over Interstate-15. This kind of progressive development has the potential to become signature urban design that could serve as a landmark for the neighborhood, and for the City of San José.

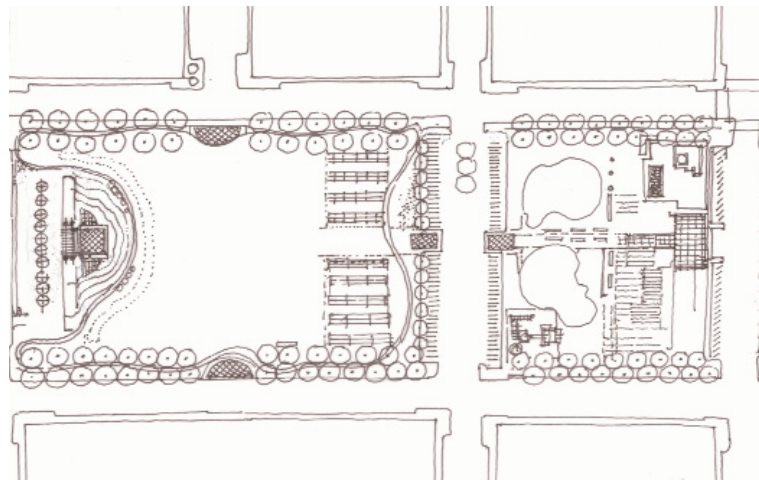
Construction of a deck above a freeway requires agreements with the California Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Department. The overall concept is an expensive endeavor and a major capital project. However, the net benefit of capitalizing on this unused space should be considered as one of the only alternative ways to create significant park lands in this area. Another way would be to acquire housing or commercial sites in the neighborhood and pay for relocation. Not only would this be an enormous cost, but it is often not politically or socially desirable. The objective of the *Neighborhood Improvement Plan* is to conduct a feasibility study of the use of air rights for park development, to determine the potential costs, funding opportunities and implementation requirements for such a project.

The community prefers to reserve this space for parks and open space, and possibly for a community center and/or library. However, if the proposed feasibility study reveals that a certain type of commercial or residential development might offset sizeable construction costs, making freeway park development viable, alternatives could be considered. For example, one alternative to help offset sizeable costs might be to provide development opportunities and

shared use of the air rights for other community needs, such as additional affordable housing, community service buildings, educational or healthcare facilities related to nearby San José City College and the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center. A feasibility study could explore a range of possible development scenarios.

Interstate-280 air rights development should be explored between Macarthur and Menker Avenues (existing frontage roads and access ramps would remain). The parks and open spaces within the site could be available for a number of recreational activities including: soccer/ball fields, children's play equipment for various age groups, community gardens, and picnic areas. The site should also include public parking and restrooms for the park facilities, and could include other park features, such as water elements, pedestrian-scaled lighting for safety and security, entry features, a bandstand and amphitheater, and a public plaza. A new freeway park design could accommodate small and large-scale community gatherings and could include community buildings for indoor activities, meetings and recreation. But the first and foremost priority should be open space and recreation development.

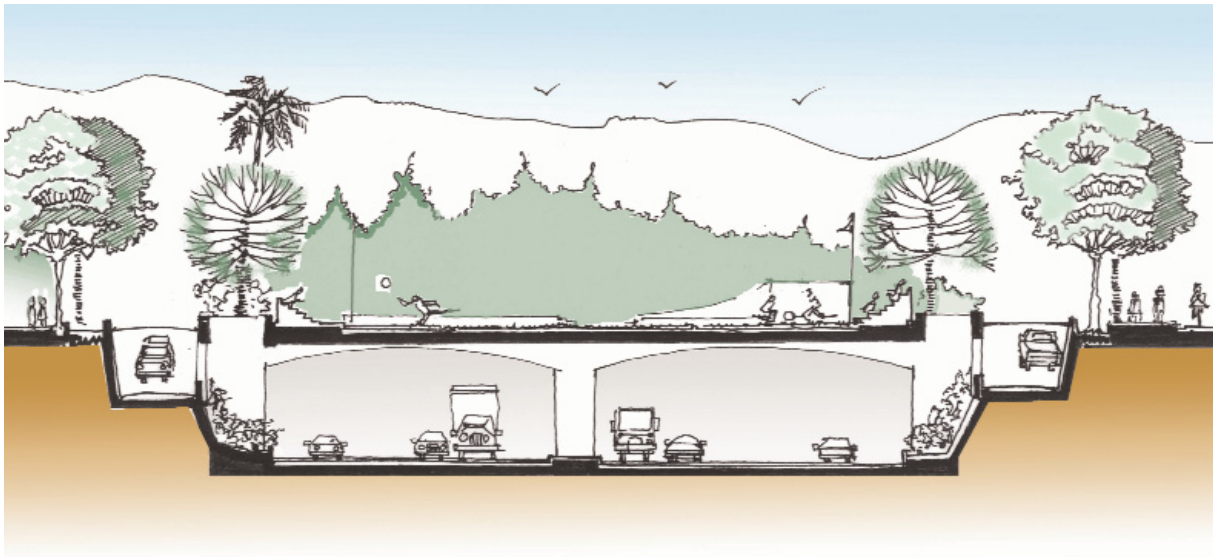
New development associated with the use of highway air rights should be limited to the sites adjacent to major cross streets (Bascom Avenue, Leigh Avenue, and Leland Avenue) and should be designed to provide visual surveillance of the public open spaces while maintaining public access through to open spaces and parking. In some areas, however, an important aspect of the design is to provide adequate fencing and screening from adjoining busy streets and freeway ramps to maintain safe access



Artist's plan view rendering of a freeway park concept, with amphitheater, field, community and display gardens, tot lots, and a running path.

and park use, and reduce noise from the streets and to the adjoining residential areas. Pedestrian access to the new park would be provided at major controlled (signalized) intersections such as Bascom Avenue, Leland Avenue and Leigh Avenue.

Use of the air-rights above the freeway at Bascom Avenue also provides an opportunity to create additional public parking for retail uses along Bascom Avenue and for the potential reuse of the Burbank Theater. Currently, a major objective of the neighborhood plan is to evaluate the potential reuse of the Burbank Theater as a community facility (see the *Community Facilities* heading in this *Improvement Plan Concepts* section). The old theater, however, lacks sufficient on-site parking, and use of the adjacent freeway air rights could provide the extra space needed to make reuse of this unique site viable. Special care would be needed in providing safe and convenient access across Parkmoor Avenue from the potential parking lot to the theater site.



Section view of conceptual *air rights* open space development opportunity over Interstate-280.

Richmond-Menker Park Development Opportunity

Another opportunity site for potential park development is at the Richmond-Menker multi-family housing complex. Richmond-Menker has been singled out by the community as being in dire need of overall improvement. The complex, which consists of 31 four-plex units in a one-block area, is home to roughly 600 people. In addition to overcrowding, insufficient parking, illegal dumping and general blighted conditions, there are no places for children to play, and no open space for family gathering or socializing with neighbors. The newly formed Richmond-Menker property owners' association would like to explore opportunities for creating a common play area and private open space for residents. This could be part of a larger revitalization strategy for the apartments, involving tenants, and other stakeholders, such as the Richmond-Menker Action Task Force, and People Acting in Community Together (PACT).

Preliminary ideas for creating public park space here range from completely redeveloping and redesigning the collection of buildings, to relocating/redeveloping a couple of the centrally-located parcels, to redesigning portions of the streets.



Residents rely significantly on San José City College to share their campus facilities as community resources.



The local faith community often share their facilities with the public.

Community Facilities

The Burbank/Del Monte community does not have a dedicated neighborhood center facility and there is little room for new development in the neighborhood. There are no indoor places specifically designed to accommodate public programs and services and to hold community meetings. Residents rely on local schools and religious institutions to share their recreational and gathering spaces with the public.

Although community members appreciate the use of these facilities, they would like to take steps towards developing a center of their own, that would have the sole purpose of serving the needs of the immediate community (see figure 4).

Strategies for bridging the gap in neighborhood facilities include:

- Conduct a programs/services inventory and a facility needs assessment to determine what kind of space is required to support desired programs/services;
- Explore options for reprogramming existing facilities (such as Sherman Oaks Community Center);
- Explore potential partnerships to expand existing or planned facilities (such as at Sherman Oaks Community Charter School, Luther Burbank Elementary or San José City College);
- Investigate potential opportunities to reuse underutilized or vacant buildings; and
- Explore strategies for acquiring land for facility development.

Programs/Services Inventory and Facility Needs Assessment

Conducting an inventory of programs/services currently offered in the Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood and identifying new/improved programs will help plan for future facilities by indicating what type of space would be required to support the ultimate array of desired programs and services. A facility needs assessment would then compare the spatial needs based on this spectrum of

programs/services, to available space (facilities that are available in some capacity to be shared with the community) in the neighborhood. This information will be valuable in determining where potential reprogramming of existing facilities would be beneficial. Some sites and spaces may be better suited to certain uses than others. A facility needs assessment will help maximize existing space and pinpoint priorities for acquiring new sites.

Reprogram Existing Facilities

Working with the appropriate stakeholders, it may be possible to negotiate options for reprogramming existing neighborhood facilities. “Reprogramming” refers to shifting programs or services offered at neighborhood facilities to other facilities, or re-evaluating the continuation of those programs altogether. In this neighborhood, where space is especially limited, reprogramming can be an effective means of maximizing space. For example, community members have pointed to the critical need for a preschool in the neighborhood. A preschool requires a very specific type of physical environment. Sherman Oaks Community Center may provide the best fit physically to accommodate a preschool, whereas, other programs, currently offered at Sherman Oaks, could be just as effectively hosted at alternative facilities. In this case, shifting programs may help to better meet the needs of area residents, while also maximizing space.

Additionally, since the Sherman Oaks Community Center currently offers some programs that many residents feel do not adequately serve the needs of the immediate community, it may be especially beneficial to determine whether this space might be used for programs that are higher priorities for Burbank/Del Monte residents. This would involve working with the appropriate stakeholders, and re-evaluating the sub-lease agreement for use of the community center.



Explore options for reprogramming Sherman Oaks Community Center.

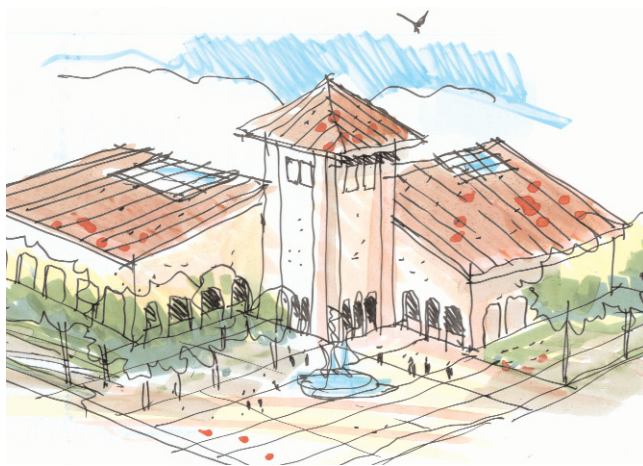
Potential Partnerships

A joint-use agreement between San José City College and the City of San José is under negotiation to develop a 17,000 square foot shared recreational facility at the College. However, funding for this project is limited, and a significant funding gap needs to be filled in order to complete plans for this project. One of the ways

that the community, the City and the college can work together is to seek additional sources of funding to build an appropriate-sized community center. This is a high priority for Burbank/Del Monte residents (See top priority: *Work with San José City College...* in the *Strategic Action Plan* section of this document). Such partnerships are a creative way of providing valuable resources that will benefit the entire community.

Additional opportunities to develop joint-partnerships should be explored, such as with School Districts, community-based organizations, and/or religious institutions. With the

appropriate stakeholder interest and the availability of adequate funding, arrangements might be made to allow for shared costs and joint-use of a neighborhood center at a local school, such as Sherman Oaks Community Charter School, Luther Burbank Elementary School, or at a neighborhood church.



A high priority for community members is to develop a community center in the neighborhood.



Residents would like to explore reuse of the Burbank Theater.

Reuse of Underutilized or Vacant Buildings

Another strategy for gaining community facility space in the neighborhood is to investigate potential opportunities to reuse underutilized or vacant buildings. Of particular interest to the community is the potential reuse of the historic Burbank Theater, possibly as a cultural and musical performance center, or for other public uses. This older movie theater, with its landmark “Burbank” marquis,

could be used as a public theater for local entertainment, musical performances and plays. Reuse of this theater would not only provide much needed gathering space in the neighborhood, but would also support the community's aim to preserve the historic theater marquis and retain the historic character of the space.

The theater currently lacks sufficient on-site parking, and a major challenge in reuse of this building will be to provide sufficient parking to support the proposed use of the site. A feasibility study and possible development scenarios should be developed for the Burbank Theater site, as well as for other potential development sites.

Underutilized warehouse style buildings in the industrial area between Meridian Avenue and Los Gatos Creek could also provide opportunities for reuse. An early 20th century masonry building might be used as a neighborhood service center, and retrofitted where possible to maintain its unique character.



Underutilized warehouse building.

Land Acquisition

Because the Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood is so extensively developed, vacant land is at a premium. All of the potential scenarios described below would, of course, require significant funding, and a variety of funding resources would need to be explored.

As described in the previous *Parks & Open Space* section, a creative strategy for acquiring space for a community center, as well as park space, is to explore the idea of buying air rights to build a platform over the suppressed highway. The first step toward exploring this concept is to conduct a feasibility study (See top priority: *Conduct a feasibility study for developing a “freeway park”*...in the *Strategic Action Plan* section of this document).

Another strategy for finding sufficient space to develop a neighborhood center involves looking for a number of adjoining commercial lots that could be acquired from willing property owners and consolidated to accommodate a large facility.

In addition to developing a potential park adjacent to Los Gatos Creek at the Del Monte site, community members also envision a neighborhood center in connection with that park. In the event that the Del Monte site was developed, the community may have an opportunity to secure some land for park/neighborhood center development as part of a developer's dedication requirement.

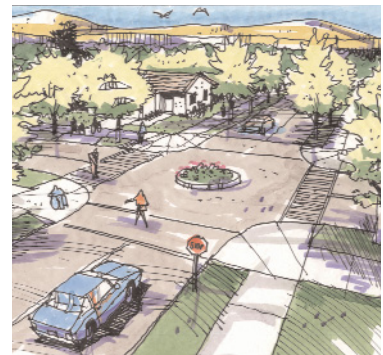
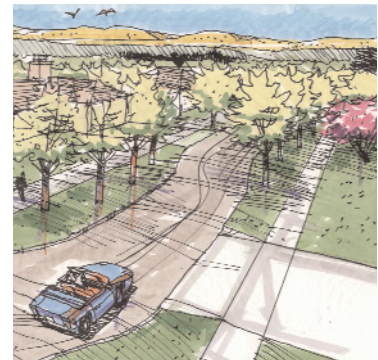
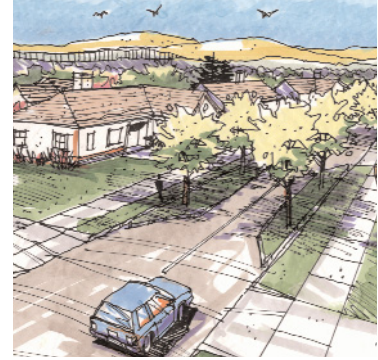
Circulation and Transportation

One of the central concepts of the *Burbank/Del Monte Neighborhood Improvement Plan* is improving circulation and transportation patterns throughout the neighborhood. Cut-through traffic, perceived speeding, traffic and parking congestion, and poor pedestrian/bicycle access are the primary issues in the neighborhood. There is also concern with regard to deteriorating roadway surfacing and incomplete or deteriorating curbs, gutters and sidewalks. These conditions detract from the character of the neighborhood and negatively effect pedestrian activity.

Residents aim to improve traffic flow, as well as vehicular and pedestrian access to key destinations, reduce cut-through traffic and speeds, and improve the overall appearance and function of the street through improved roadways, sidewalks, landscaping and pedestrian amenities (see figure 5). Creating a safe and efficient circulation system in the Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood involves the following major improvement strategies:

- Conduct traffic studies focused on reduction of cut-through traffic and speeds on residential streets;
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections throughout the area;
- Complete roadway and sidewalk improvements, including curb, gutter and sidewalk installation or repair, and street resurfacing;
- Establish a specialty trolley service along West San Carlos Street; and
- Explore means to reduce parking congestion.

Options for consideration might include street narrowing through landscaped chokers, chicanes and traffic circles, which can not only help to tame traffic, but can be aesthetically pleasing as well.



Traffic calming options for consideration might include: chokers; chicanes and/or traffic circles (shown in concept sketches above) - Specific measures would be determined only after a traffic calming study has been conducted.



Traffic backed up on West San Carlos.

Traffic Calming

West San Carlos Street and Fruitdale Avenue experience traffic congestion, exacerbating cut-through traffic volumes and related problems on nearby residential streets. Neighbors would like to take steps to redirect cut-through traffic, reduce speeds and improve pedestrian safety. Two areas that would especially benefit from traffic flow studies and potential improvements are:

- The Sherman Oaks neighborhood in the vicinity of San José City College; and
- The Burbank and Buena Vista neighborhoods between West San Carlos Street and Interstate-280.

Traffic studies should be conducted in these areas to determine what type of traffic calming measures would best address specific problems. Options for consideration might include street narrowing through landscaped chokers, chicanes and traffic circles, which can not only help to tame traffic, but can be aesthetically pleasing as well. Traffic calming decisions should only be made after the effects of proposed traffic calming measures have been analyzed for their impact on other nearby residential streets, and definitive traffic calming decisions should be made with the full participation of affected residents, property owners and neighborhood associations.

In addition to physical speed reduction devices, programmatic speed reduction techniques such as increased police presence, more aggressive ticketing, and posting additional speed limit signs should also be explored. The Neighborhood Automated Speed Compliance Program (NASCO) has been successful in other neighborhoods, and could prove beneficial here as well. This program utilizes a computer in a parked vehicle to photograph speeding cars and issue tickets via mail.

There are a number of intersections in these areas that could benefit from improvements (see figure 5: *Circulation/Transportation Concept*). Intersection improvements might include enhanced pedestrian crosswalks, curb, gutter and sidewalk installation or

repair, ADA retrofitting where appropriate, signals, stop signs or other traffic calming devices as needed. Potential crosswalk locations should be carefully evaluated to determine where lights or stop signs need to be paired with crosswalk striping to ensure pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

SHERMAN OAKS/SAN JOSÉ CITY COLLEGE

The Sherman Oaks neighborhood around San José City College is especially subject to cut-through traffic because of heavy traffic movements between Interstate 280 and the College, with motorists getting on and off the freeway, and moving to and from the College. In general, there is a lot of cut-through traffic off Fruitdale Avenue, up into the Sherman Oaks residential neighborhood. Some of the traffic congestion in this area may be improved as the College finishes its new parking structure (since the structure will reduce the amount of parking access from Fruitdale Avenue through the residential streets south of the College).

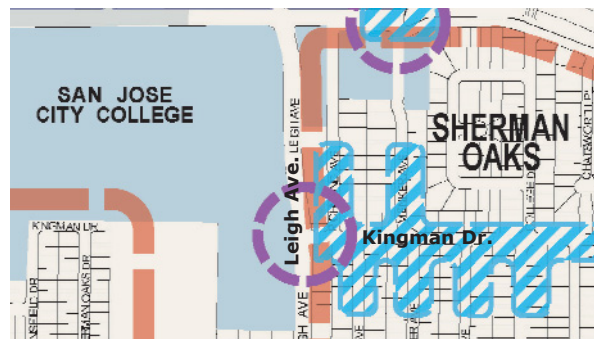
Residents are particularly concerned about the intersection of Kingman Drive and Leigh Avenue, adjacent to San José City College. This is a frequently used crossing point for pedestrians and bicycles entering the College. Many pedestrians and cyclists coming from the Sherman Oaks neighborhood travel along Kingman Drive and cross Leigh Avenue to access the College and the sports fields. The typical heavy volume of traffic on Leigh and the lack of signalization make crossing a challenge. This intersection has been the topic of ongoing discussions between the Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Association, San José City College and City traffic engineers. Providing for an improved crossing at this intersection will become even more critical as the planned joint-use recreational facility is developed in this area. Installation of a three-way traffic signal and highly visible crosswalks should be considered for this location.



Speed limit enforcement is a critical part of traffic calming.



The intersection of Leigh/Fruitdale is frequently used by school children and is in critical need of improvement.



Residents are particularly concerned about the intersection of Kingman Dr. and Leigh Ave. at S.J. City College.

Another area that is in particular need of attention is the intersection of Leigh Avenue and Fruitdale Avenue. Both Leigh and Fruitdale are busy streets, and since the intersection is frequently used by school children and other pedestrians heading to Sherman Oaks Community Charter School, the community would like to see crossing improvements.

The major intersection of Fruitdale Avenue and Southwest Expressway also needs significant improvements. Since high density housing is planned for two corners of the intersection (the Hudson property and the Kmart site) and since the Fruitdale light rail station will be located here, it is especially crucial that this intersection be pedestrian-friendly.



Crosswalks should be highly visible.

The nearby Meridian Avenue/Fruitdale Avenue intersection also plays an important role in the community, with Fruitdale serving as a major east-west corridor and connecting link to the Los Gatos Creek Trail in the Sherman Oaks neighborhood. Because of its proximity to the services mentioned above, access through this intersection should also be made as pedestrian-friendly as possible.

BURBANK AND BUENA VISTA NEIGHBORHOODS

The residents Burbank and Buena Vista neighborhoods between West San Carlos Street and Interstate-280 also report concerns about traffic volumes and speeds. Frequent traffic congestion along W. San Carlos Street prompts motorists to seek alternative routes by cutting through residential neighborhoods. This can create a difficult environment for pedestrians.

Traffic improvements on West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue might include improving/extending left-hand turn pockets off major streets and synchronizing signalization.



Calmed traffic will contribute to safer streets for walking and bicycling.

Priority intersections for improvement in the Burbank and Buena Vista residential neighborhoods are along Scott Street and Auzerai Avenue, where a proposed primary pedestrian route is proposed in this *Plan*. The intersections of Scott Street and Bascom Avenue, Scott Street and Leigh Avenue, and Auzerai Avenue and Meridian

Avenue could benefit from highly visible, enhanced crosswalks, in accordance with the City's recently adopted crosswalk guidelines. For those intersections within County pockets, residents should pursue improvements with the County's Department of Roads and Airports.

Overall, reduced and calmed traffic in the neighborhood may contribute a better walking and bicycling environment, less noise pollution, improved neighborhood appearance and ambiance, and potentially increased property values.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections

A major neighborhood improvement goal for the community is to develop pedestrian-friendly connections throughout the Burbank/Del Monte area with pedestrian/bicycle routes, intersection and sidewalk improvements, and lighting.

Interstate-280 and Southwest Expressway (a future light rail corridor) bisect the Burbank/Del Monte area, making pedestrian connections within the neighborhood challenging. Many frequently traveled intersections lack crosswalks or need crosswalk enhancements and sidewalk improvements. Because Burbank/Del Monte is an older neighborhood some sidewalks may need enhancements or are discontinuous in both the County and the City. Some areas that do have curbs, gutters and sidewalks have not been designed to accommodate people with disabilities, consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). These conditions and the lack of designated pedestrian/bicycle routes in the area can discourage walking and bicycle use in the neighborhood.

Residents would like to create pedestrian and bicycle-friendly connections to key destinations. Clearly designated pedestrian/bicycle routes, intersection/crosswalk improvements, sidewalk improvements, and pedestrian amenities will contribute to a more hospitable environment for pedestrians and cyclists.



Residential streets should be made more pedestrian and bicycle friendly, especially near schools.



The pedestrian/bikeway should be clearly designated with signage.

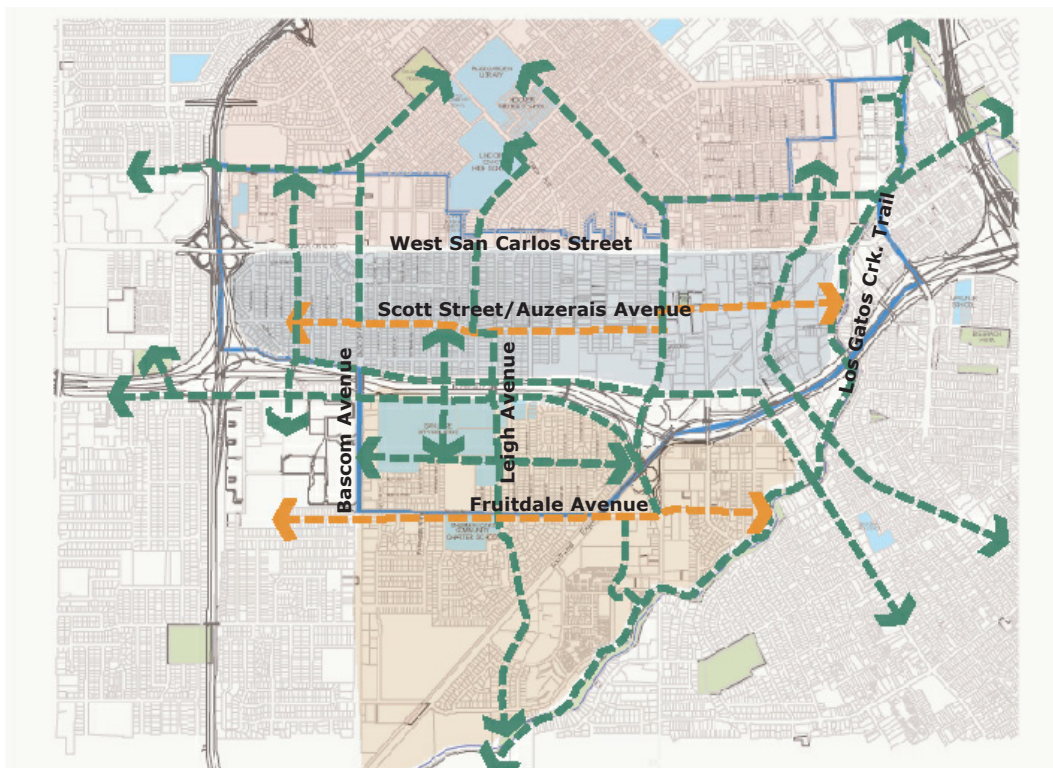


Primary bikeways can also be delineated with special striping.

Neighborhood Connections

An effective network of pedestrian/bicycle routes in the Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood would improve connections to the following key destinations:

- Open space resources, such as neighborhood parks and the Los Gatos Creek regional trail system;
- Community facilities, such as San José City College (and the proposed multi-use recreation facility/community center), Sherman Oaks Community Charter School, Luther Burbank Elementary School and Lincoln Senior High School;
- Commercial corridors, such as W. San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue;
- Transit stops, such as the Diridon (CalTrain/ACE/Amtrak) Station, bus stops and future light rail stops.



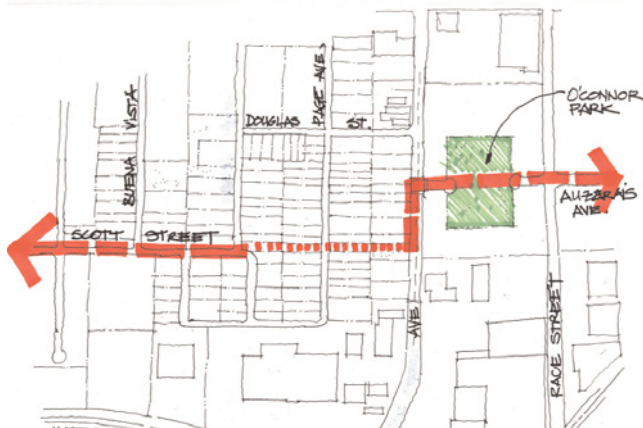
Part of the overall improvement concept is to create a pedestrian/bikeway network through the area connecting to parks, recreational sites, schools, and the Los Gatos Creek Trail.

Connections between these destinations should be strengthened through streetscape and intersection improvements. Residents should work with the appropriate City and County departments to request that a traffic analysis be conducted to determine what type of intersection improvements are warranted, and to confirm where bike lanes could be accommodated.

In order to provide an effective pedestrian/bicycle network through the neighborhood, planning must consider a seamless integration of improvements into the surrounding community. These improvements need to be balanced between east/west-oriented and north/south-oriented commercial corridors and residential streets. Residential streets can provide the safest routes, especially for children who walk or ride bikes to neighborhood schools and parks, while commercial corridors often provide a more direct alternative.

East/West Linkages

Primary east/west residential linkages in the neighborhood are Scott Street/Auzerais Avenue, Kingman Drive, and Fruitdale Avenue. The major east/west commercial linkage in the area is West San Carlos Street.



As a long-term goal, a direct connection is envisioned between Scott Street and Auzerais Avenue.



Interim route is via Douglas Street.

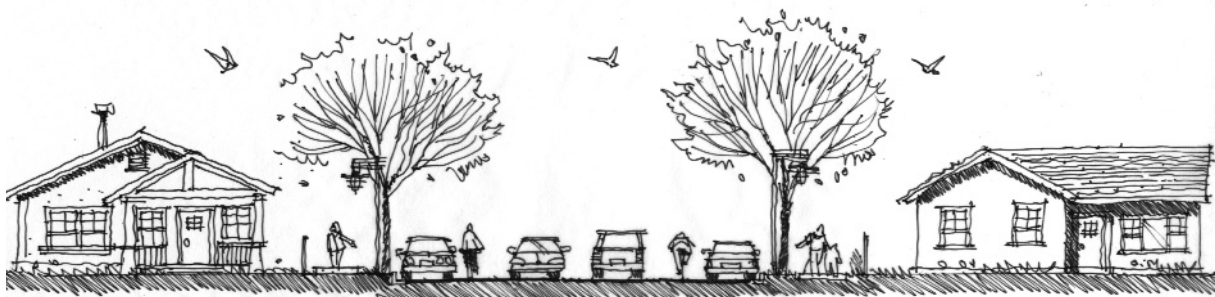
SCOTT STREET/AUZERAIS AVENUE

Scott Street/Auzerais Avenue is envisioned as the central pedestrian link through the neighborhood, lined with pocket parks and street trees, and terminating in a proposed community park at Los Gatos Creek (see top priority: *Designate Scott/Auzerais as the primary pedestrian/bikeway...* in the Strategic Action Plan section). Opportunities to install signage to designate this corridor as a primary pedestrian/bikeway should be investigated.

As a long-term goal, a direct connection is envisioned between Scott Street and Auzerais Avenue, to provide more convenient access along this proposed pedestrian/bicycle corridor. This would require acquiring some lots to use as a designated pedestrian/bikeway. Until the feasibility of this has been explored further, a local street, such as Douglas Street, could be used as a transition between Scott Street and Auzerais Avenue.

KINGMAN DRIVE

As discussed in the previous section, Kingman Drive is frequently used by pedestrians and cyclists traveling to the College and to adjacent sports fields. Since the intersection of Kingman Drive and Leigh Avenue



Conceptual section of potential Scott Street improvements with sidewalks, bike lanes, lighting, landscaping and route signage.

serves as an important entrance to the College for pedestrians/cyclists, this is an important area to study for intersection improvements. Additionally, the College is currently working to create a walking path through the campus that can be accessed from Kingman Drive. And, an additional walking path is planned at northern entrances to the College from Bascom and Leigh Avenues. Opportunities to install lighting along these walking paths through the College should be explored.

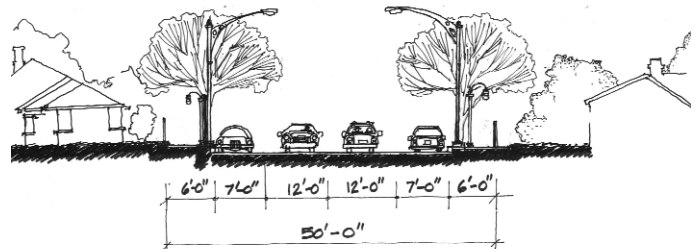
FRUITDALE AVENUE

Fruitdale Avenue, the southernmost neighborhood corridor, is an important threshold to the Sherman Oaks neighborhood, which extends south of the Burbank/Del Monte Strong Neighborhoods Initiative planning area. Fruitdale Avenue should serve as a major east-west pedestrian/bicycle route, linking key destinations, such as Santa Clara Valley Medical Center, San José City College, Sherman Oaks Community Charter School, the planned park at Saint Elizabeth Drive, the planned Vasona Corridor Light Rail transit stop, and the Los Gatos Creek Trail.

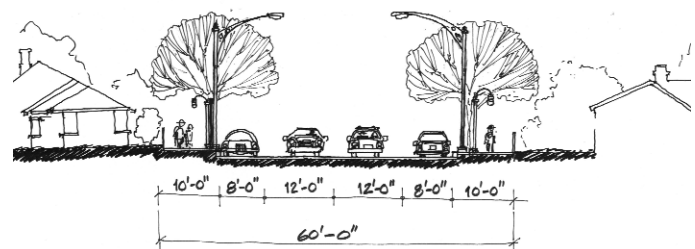
North/South Linkages

Primary north/south connections are Macarthur Avenue, Bascom Avenue (primary commercial corridor), Clifton/Hester Avenue, and Leigh Avenue. Intersection and roadway improvements should be targeted along these corridors.

The Los Gatos Creek Trail is an important north/south connection that is part of the city-wide regional trails network. A critical part of the concept for improving pedestrian and bicycle access in the neighborhood involves improving access to the Los Gatos Creek Trail and completing creek-side trail extensions.



Scott Street varies in width: 50' wide conceptual streetscape scenario.



Scott Street varies in width: 60' wide conceptual streetscape scenario.

A major north-south connection off of the Scott/Auzerais corridor is via Leigh Avenue, south to the Los Gatos Creek Trail. In order to integrate the connection between the Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood with the surrounding community, streetscape, beautification, sidewalk and intersection improvements should continue to the Los Gatos Creek Trail connection at Leigh Avenue.

The abandoned Southern Pacific rail right-of-way could also provide an opportunity to create an effective north/south linkage.

LOS GATOS CREEK TRAIL

The Los Gatos Creek Trail is a valuable open space and recreational amenity in the neighborhood. The trail not only provides for activities, such as bicycling, skating, walking and jogging, but it also serves as a potential link between the Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood and the region.

In order to strengthen this link, a high priority for community members is to complete creek-side Los Gatos Creek Trail connections. Ultimately, residents would like to see the entire Los Gatos Creek Trail as a creek-side trail with extensions from Park Avenue north to The Alameda, and from Lonus Street south to Meridian Avenue. Neighborhood Advisory Committee members, neighborhood associations, and committed citizens should submit a formal request to the Parks and Recreation Commission to ensure that these creek-side Los Gatos Creek Trail extensions in the Burbank/Del Monte area are specified as a long-term goal in the Los Gatos Creek Trail Plan.

Since visual access to the creek is an integral part of the Los Gatos Creek Trail experience, residents would like to maintain a creek-side trail connection where at all possible.

Developing creek-side trail access in the Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood from Lonus Street south to Fruitdale Avenue, and eventually to Meridian Avenue, will be especially challenging since this part of the creek runs along the back of multiple privately owned



The Los Gatos Creek Trail is a valuable amenity in the neighborhood.

lots. In order to close the gap in creek-side trail access in this area, access easements will need to be secured and/or lots will need to be purchased. However, this remains a long-term goal for community members.

A phasing plan could allow for designation of a temporary pedestrian/bikeway along Fruitdale Avenue (Phase I) until the long-term creek-side segments from Lonus to Fruitdale (Phase II) and from Fruitdale to Meridian (Phase III) can be completed.

ABANDONED UNION PACIFIC RAIL RIGHT-OF-WAY

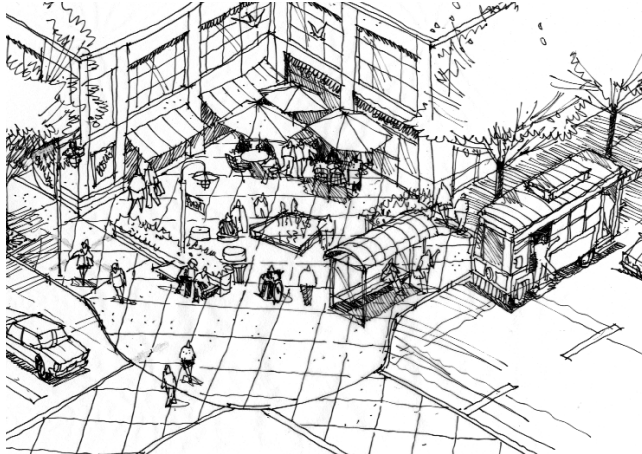
Opportunities to reuse the abandoned Union Pacific Rail right-of-way as a pedestrian/bikeway should be explored. This right-of-way could potentially provide a safe, pleasant, off-road north/south connection through the neighborhood.

NORTH-SOUTH CONNECTION TO SAN JOSÉ CITY COLLEGE

Residents would like to create a stronger pedestrian connection between San José City College and the surrounding community. Although there is a pedestrian bridge over Interstate-280 at College Avenue, a long-term goal is to build a pedestrian bridge at Leland Avenue as well, to make access more convenient to the residential neighborhood to the north of the College. Also, as discussed previously under *Parks and Open Space*, pedestrian access is envisioned between the potential freeway park and the College, via Bascom Avenue, Leland Avenue and Leigh Avenue.



Residents would like to explore opportunities to reuse the abandoned Union Pacific right-of-way as a pedestrian/bikeway.



Benches, covered bus shelters, trash receptacles, newspaper vending machines and informational kiosks could be located at primary commercial transit stops.

Commercial Corridors

Pedestrian access along West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue, and connections to these commercial corridors from the surrounding neighborhood should be improved through sidewalk and crosswalk installations and designated pedestrian/bikeways. Additional pedestrian improvements on West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue, could include amenities to help create a more hospitable retail and transit-oriented environment, such as benches, covered bus shelters, trash receptacles, newspaper vending machines, and informational kiosks. These types of amenities should be tied

to primary clusters of pedestrian activity, such as transit stops adjacent to neighborhood-serving retail uses. Specific locations of key pedestrian activity areas should be identified during development of the economic strategy for these corridors (see top priority: *Create an economic development strategy...* in the *Strategic Action Plan* section), with the participation of the West San Carlos Business Association.

Lighting

Residents specified a need for pedestrian lighting to improve visibility at San José City College, particularly along Moorpark and Leigh Avenues, and also on the planned walking paths through the College. The proposed pedestrian corridor, Scott Street/Auzerais Avenue, could also benefit from improved lighting.



Lighting and covered bus shelters with seating contribute to a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

Roadway/Sidewalk Improvements

Well-maintained streets and sidewalks contribute to pedestrian and vehicular safety and commercial vitality. The City is currently working to resurface streets in the City portions of the area. Some areas in the neighborhood could also use improvements to curbs, gutters and sidewalks.

SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS

Many streets in the Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood need either sidewalk installation or sidewalk improvements (see figure 4). As funding becomes available, streets should be systematically evaluated and treated for necessary improvements. As the primary pedestrian spine through the area, Scott Street is a top priority for sidewalk improvements. Currently, discontinuous and aging sidewalks on the north side of Scott Street between Richmond Avenue and Buena Vista Avenue are being improved with new sidewalk installation. Other streets that particularly need sidewalk improvements are Leigh, Kingman, Fruitdale (between Sherman Oaks and Southwest Expressway), Moorpark (between Leigh and Interstate-280), Parkmoor at Menker, and Meridian Avenue under Southwest Expressway and from Parkmoor to Curci.

The County recently installed new curbs and gutters along Cleveland Avenue and completed four handicapped accessible ramps just north of the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative area at Olive Street and Cleveland Avenue. The Burbank Community Association and the Burbank Sanitary District in collaboration with the County Roads and Airports Department have begun a roughly \$500,000 project to install ADA ramps, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and valley drains in the unincorporated Burbank/Del Monte area from Bascom to Forest and Wabash to West San Carlos.



Many areas of the neighborhood could use sidewalk improvements.

STREET SURFACING

Residents have reported some surface problems with streets in the neighborhood. Scott Street, Richmond, Menker and many streets in the southern portion of the St. Leo's neighborhood have potholes that need to be repaired. In the Buena Vista neighborhood along Scott Street near Willard Avenue and along Page Avenue near Scott, tree roots are cracking the street and sidewalk.

An accelerated paving program for sealing or resurfacing Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood City streets is currently underway. Normally, streets are scheduled for improvement by the

Department of Transportation on a ten-year cycle. Under the accelerated program, local City streets that have not been maintained in the last four years have been either sealed in the summer of 2001 or are scheduled for resurfacing in the spring of 2002. The schedule for street resurfacing is subject to modification due to construction or utility installation projects that may occur on or adjacent to streets proposed for resurfacing.

Burbank/Del Monte streets that have been recommended for chip sealed in 2001 include: Bailey, Basile, Bellerose, Bradley, Chiechi, Ciro, Clifton, Corlista, Crandall, Del Mar, Di Fiore, Disalvo, Douglas, Flag, Goodwin, Kingman, Mac Arthur, McEvoy, Menker, Parkmoor, Patton, Pioneer, Richmond, San Fernando, Savaker, Scott (at Clifton), Sunol, Willard, and Moorpark.

Streets scheduled to be chipsealed in 2002 include: Kingman, Mansfield, Randolph, Rexford and Sherman Oaks.

Streets scheduled for resurfacing in spring 2002 include: Chauncey, Chiechi, Clarmar, College, Concord, Deland, Elliot, Gifford, , Home, Josefa, Nevin, O'Connor, Patterson, Amos, Revy, Richmond, Sonoma, Via Pisa and Willard.

In addition, major streets Parkmoor and Lincoln have been resurfaced in 2001. Leigh is scheduled to be slurry sealed in spring 2003.

Other streets recommended for slurry seal include: Autumn, Auzerai, Delmas, Forest, Meridian, Montgomery, Moorpark, Park, Parkmoor, Race, San Fernando and Scott (from Willard to Clifton). Scheduling of these streets will be based on available funding.

Additionally, the County recently completed a complete reconstruction of Cleveland Avenue from West San Carlos Street to Forest Avenue.

West San Carlos Street/Bascom Avenue Trolley

As part of a larger economic development strategy, residents aim to diversify West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue businesses, create a more attractive and comfortable street environment, improve public transportation, pedestrian and vehicular access, and transform the character of these commercial areas. Establishing a trolley-type of transit service along West San Carlos Street with an extension down Bascom Avenue would help change the nature of these corridors, while also providing much needed public transportation connections.

As a major transportation corridor through the City, the West San Carlos Street/Stevens Creek corridor has been identified for future development intensification and possible light rail construction. Six other corridors are also under consideration by the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) for potential light rail construction. In order to support current and anticipated development, business owners and residents in the Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood support the long-term goal of a light rail extension along the West San Carlos/Stevens Creek corridor. In this regard, community members have expressed a preference for historic trolley cars as opposed to standard light rail cars. If this corridor is selected for light rail construction, it will likely take a minimum of 7-10 years to complete construction and begin service.

As a more immediate objective, the community would like to see a historic trolley route established along this corridor and down Bascom Avenue, using rubber tire technology (similar to the historic trolleys currently used for public transit in San Francisco) with no overhead wires. This would capture some of the history of the area and provide connections through the neighborhood. If light rail installation is eventually approved for this corridor, residents would also prefer the use of historic cars here as well.

The historic trolley route envisioned by the community would provide convenient access along commercial corridors (West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue); connections to key destinations within



Historic San José trolley car.



Historic San José trolley car.



Historic San José trolley car.



The trolley route should extend down Bascom to Santa Clara Valley Medical Center and San José City College.

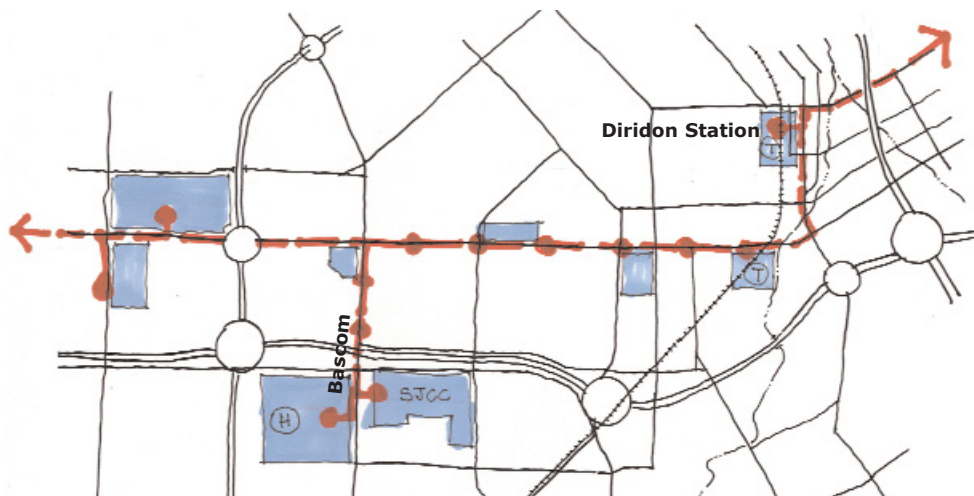


The trolley route should connect to the multi-modal Diridon Station.

the neighborhood, such as the Diridon Station, San José City College and Santa Clara County Valley Medical Center; and connections to regional destinations, such as the Valley Fair Shopping Center, Santana Row, and Downtown. A potential route would run primarily along West San Carlos Street, but would also extend up to the Diridon Station to pick up commuters, and down Bascom Avenue, to accommodate college students/faculty and hospital clients/staff. Trolley stops should be coordinated with key transit connections and destinations at major intersections.

In moving ahead with the near-term objective of operating a historic rubber tire trolley transit service, a feasibility study needs to be conducted to confirm viability of the concept. A feasibility study will also help determine what the critical next steps should be for creating this system. Studying similar trolley services offered in other cities could also provide valuable information with regard to planning, installation and funding.

With regard to the longer-term goal of West San Carlos Street/Stevens Creek light rail installation (preferably operating his-



Proposed historic trolley route: From the Diridon Station to W. San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue.

toric trolley cars), residents should participate in the VTA's "Two New Rail Corridors Study" for designation of potential light rail routes. Active participation by Burbank/Del Monte residents in the study will help ensure that, to the extent possible, light rail plans are made with consideration of the community's priorities as specified in this *Plan*.

Parking

The most significant parking congestion is reported on neighborhood streets where multi-family housing is located, such as near the Richmond-Menker apartments. At the time many of these multi-family units were built, parking standards were minimal, and people's reliance on automobiles was not as strong as it is today.

A higher than average number of occupants living in apartment units also contributes significantly to parking congestion in the neighborhood. This situation is tied to a much larger economic issue in the Bay Area: high housing costs require many low-income families to share dwelling units and the increased number of residents with vehicles exceeds the available parking spaces allocated for each unit.

Parking is also tight around San José City College with the influx of students, faculty and visitors to the College. This situation should be somewhat improved by the new parking garage that the College is in the process of constructing .

Businesses along West San Carlos Street could also benefit from additional parking to make retail use more convenient. At the time many of these buildings were constructed, commercial developers were not required to provide on-site parking like they are today. Additionally, the commercial lots along West San Carlos Street are small and shallow, and most are individually owned. These conditions make it even more difficult to retrofit sites with parking.

Potential strategies for relieving parking congestion in these areas include:

- Investigate the viability of a residential parking permit program in specific areas (such as around Kingman Drive and the College);
- As part of an overall Richmond-Menker revitalization plan (see Housing Revitalization concept), consider reconfiguring Richmond and Menker streets around the Richmond-Menker apartments as a one-way loop system with new diagonal parking (in coordination with the Richmond-Menker Property Owners' Association, Richmond-Menker Action Task Force, as well as tenants and other stakeholders);
- Work with landlords and property managers to explore means of reducing overcrowding in apartments and rental units;
- Study the economic feasibility of providing additional parking lots in the area (these could be tied to multi-family complexes, or to commercial uses);
- Acquire a few underutilized or empty lots along West San Carlos Street to use as area-wide public parking lots or garages (parking lots should be fenced in and secure - a permit or fee system could be initiated);
- Develop a commercial parking implementation strategy in coordination with the West San Carlos Business Association; and
- Strengthen enforcement of parking violations and installing “no parking” signs where necessary.

Economic Development

West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue are older retail corridors, built in the 1920s and 1930s. Today, these corridors serve as major commercial arterials through the City. Older commercial buildings, lot sizes and lot configurations along these thoroughfares make it difficult to construct new buildings to meet today's retailing needs.

A key feature of the West San Carlos Shopping corridor is "Antique Alley," a cluster of antique shops located near Leigh Avenue. While these shops and many other existing businesses along these corridors are valued by local residents, much of the existing development patterns along these retail streets consist of older strip retail centers without adequate parking and landscaping. Lack of parking adjacent to stores makes retail use inconvenient. Many of the buildings front the street, directly behind narrow sidewalks, creating an uninviting environment for pedestrians. Narrow, aging or non-existent sidewalks and few crosswalks also discourage pedestrian use in the area. And, many of the buildings need maintenance, painting or major façade improvements. The area is also abundant with unattractive billboards and pole signs.

Many of the once thriving commercial uses have been replaced over the years with less attractive or viable retail uses, such as used car lots, auto repairs shops, second hand clothing stores and adult businesses (massage parlors, adult books stores, and bars).

Due to the City-County interface in this neighborhood, there is also inconsistency in the application of design and development standards. Much of the commercial areas lie within unincorporated County "urban pockets." These unincorporated areas fall within the County of Santa Clara's land use and zoning jurisdiction.

The West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue commercial corridors are in a state of transition. Both the City of San José and Santa Clara County in partnership with the Business Association have made significant improvements to the retail corridors in recent years.



The successful "Antique Alley" along West San Carlos Street is valued by residents.



There is an abundance of used car lots and unattractive signs along West San Carlos Street.



Landscape improvements on West San Carlos Street.

New landscape improvements have been installed in the median of West San Carlos Street, and the County recently received a grant to implement streetscape improvements on Bascom Avenue.

The Old Sears site on West San Carlos Street has been redeveloped as a major new neighborhood shopping center and housing complex with a new City park. And, new façade improvements are nearing completion to the old shopping center on West San Carlos at Leigh Avenue.

A major objective of the *Burbank/Del Monte Plan* is to continue the revitalization efforts along West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue. The goal is to create attractive, accessible and economically-thriving mixed use, transit-oriented corridors (see figure 6). Under-utilized and problem properties are envisioned as revitalized, mixed-use development with family-oriented retail establishments on the ground floor with new offices or housing above. This new development should be interspersed with and/or incorporate existing antique building fixtures and other businesses valued by the community.

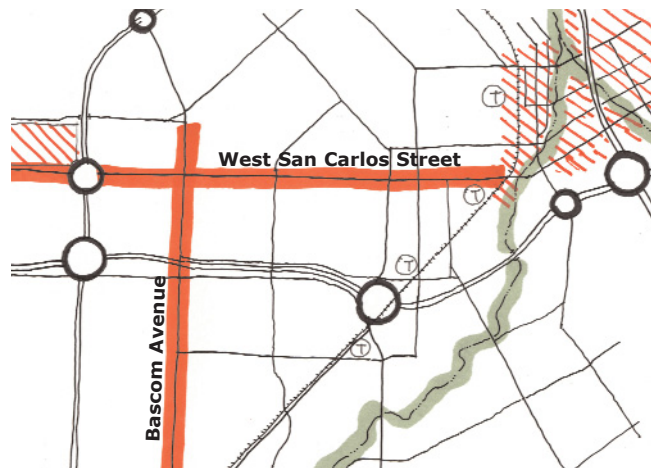
West San Carlos Street, in particular plays a significant regional role as a major transportation corridor linking downtown San José to Cupertino, and making connections to key destinations within the City, such as the Valley Fair shopping center, Santana Row, and Downtown San José to the east. Bascom Avenue is also a major arterial corridor connecting San José, south to the cities of Campbell and Los Gatos.

The role and function of both West San Carlos and Bascom are envisioned as transit-oriented, mixed-use, regional and local-serving retail streets, providing places for local retail shops and services as well as more regional-serving office and other spaces. Some existing, older retail and office establishments would be revitalized with more economically viable uses. Annexing commercial properties along West San Carlos Street would allow potential San José Redevelopment funds to be available for commercial revitalization efforts along these corridors.

A mix of affordable and market rate higher intensity housing uses are proposed along these corridors, coordinated with new transit improvements. Streetscape improvements, curb-gutter and sidewalk repairs, street trees, public art and street furniture will make the corridors more convenient and attractive for pedestrian use. Parking improvements, additional parking lots and improved driveway access, coupled with transit improvements will make these commercial places more accessible and easier to use by local and regional visitors.

Roadway and pedestrian enhancements can also support vitality of these corridors, easing traffic flow and improving pedestrian access to adjoining commercial developments and parking. Building, façade, and signage enhancements will help make these commercial areas more attractive places to work and shop.

Another economic development strategy for West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue is to explore potential lot consolidations on a case-by-case basis as a means of creating lot sizes capable of supporting more economically viable, mixed use, neighborhood-serving and family-friendly tenants that residents prefer. Lot consolidation is the process of assembling adjacent smaller commercial lots into one larger lot for redevelopment and revitalization. Consolidation of existing commercial lots along some portions of West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue would create more functional and economically viable sites for new commercial developments. This concept does not advocate the use of eminent domain to meet its objectives, although it is recognized that there may be specific circumstances where there is broad community support to use this as a tool of last resort. Potential lot consolidations should only be considered with willing sellers and the full participation of stake-



A major objective is to continue revitalization efforts along West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue.

holders. In addition, lot consolidations should not be allowed in places where it would clearly compromise the character of adjacent residential areas.

The major approach to improve the commercial corridors is to implement a comprehensive economic development strategy for both West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue. This economic development strategy should address the following initiatives:

- Diversify, recruit and retain businesses;
- Address neighborhood impacts posed by adult business uses;
- Modify land use/zoning to attract desired uses;
- Revitalize underutilized sites;
- Improve the roadway/streetscape environment;
- Enhance buildings/façades;
- Initiate an area-wide clean and safe program;
- Improve area signage;
- Increase parking;
- Implement transit system improvements; and
- Support ongoing marketing and promotion of the business area.



Commercial environment along West San Carlos Street.

Business Diversification, Recruitment and Retention

The Business Association can play a key role, in conjunction with the San José Redevelopment Agency, Office of Economic Development, and City and County planning offices as ambassadors and managers for commercial development along West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue. A key strategy is to encourage participation of businesses in shaping future uses and development of the corridors.

Another aspect of the business diversification, recruitment and retention strategy involves surveying and cataloging properties and buildings in the area and identifying sites that are vacant or underutilized that can be reused and redeveloped with new uses in keeping with the overall vision for the commercial street. The survey would also include an updated list of current businesses and property owners of each parcel.

As property becomes vacant, the Business Association would help to match potential new uses with property owners and commercial realtors to fill the vacant spaces. Desirable uses would be marketed to potential retail developers and stores, to match potential retail developers with appropriate sites and vacant buildings.

The Business Association and the City can help play the role of retail manager for the whole commercial street. As manager, the Business Association can help keep desirable uses and encourage redevelopment of older sites with new uses that add to the vitality of the whole commercial street.

There are also successful destination-oriented retail uses in the area. West San Carlos Street is home to a large contingent of antique stores known as *Antique Row*. This is one of the most successful retail sectors in the business district. The street has several long-term retail and commercial tenants, including Lou's Village, which has been in successful operation for over fifty-five years serving customers through its restaurant and banquet facilities. Mel Cotton's, a sporting goods store has been in operation since 1946, and See's Candies has a regional outlet here.

In addition to recruitment activity, the Business Association can work with existing property owners and businesses to retain successful businesses and to help make other existing stores more successful. Working in partnership with the City, the local business association can sponsor seminars on smart business practices, advertising, and store-front display techniques to help retain existing, attractive businesses in the area.

Business retention efforts can also help match City programs and funding opportunities with local business owners' needs, such as needs for improvement loans and grants or other property improvement efforts.



Strengthen the unique "Antique Alley" along West San Carlos Street.



Retain and strengthen successful existing businesses in the area.



Residents feel that the Pink Poodle and other adult businesses are not consistent with a family-friendly environment.



Community members would like to limit adult-oriented signage.

Limiting Adult Business Uses

Some older retail stores in the West San Carlos/Bascom area have been replaced with adult-themed stores, such as adult bookstores, massage parlors, and strip clubs, along with bars and liquor stores. The residents believe that the activities associated with these adult businesses often create conflict with the residential character of the surrounding neighborhood, and have been known to create additional drug, vice and other crime problems in the neighborhood. Many of the adult stores are littered with adult-oriented signs and window displays. Illegal sales of adult products, such as alcohol and cigarettes to minors, are also believed to occur at these sites.

Many of the adult businesses are located within the unincorporated County “urban pockets.” These areas have less restrictive zoning requirements than the City of San José. For example, some of the adult stores are located closer to existing schools and neighborhood services for children than City regulations would allow.

Residents feel that the number of adult-oriented businesses located in proximity to one another makes it difficult to attract more upscale and family-oriented businesses to serve the neighborhood and region. Residents also believe that these conditions depress property values for both local residential and commercial properties.

A high priority improvement action is to develop an overall strategic plan for reducing the perceived impacts of adult business activity on the neighborhood. This would involve working with the City of San José and the County of Santa Clara to address the concentration of adult businesses in the area, “crack down” on illegal activity thought to be associated with these uses (such as crime, drug sales or prostitution), and enact stronger and more restrictive zoning standards for the unincorporated County pockets.

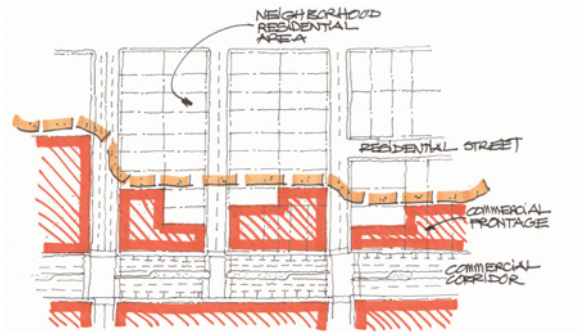
Although it may be extremely difficult, another strategy to consider

is to annex the commercial properties along West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue into the City of San José, where stricter City adult business regulations would apply. Annexation of commercial areas would also make these sites and businesses available for City redevelopment programs, improvement grants, and loans.

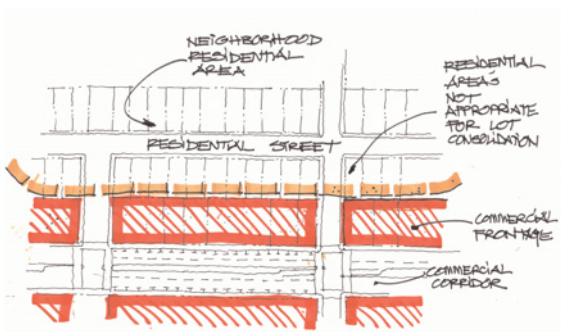
Aside from annexation and/or zoning changes, a critical component to addressing adult use problems involves documenting actual problems associated with adult business use in the neighborhood. For example, documenting where debris (such as needles or condoms) is left in the neighborhood, and documenting instances where children view adult materials (such as where a door to an adult business is left open) are important steps in reducing the impacts of adult uses. The County's District Attorney's Office offers training sessions and should be provided to teach community members how to document these problems. Residents are encouraged to participate in these training sessions and should be provided with the following contact information: Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office (408-299-7400) or the Deputy District Attorney (408-998-1561).

General Plan and Zoning Modifications

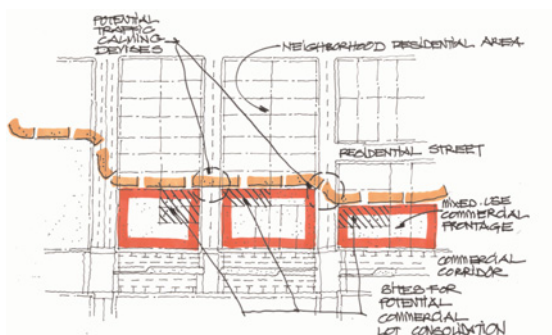
Currently the San José City General Plan and Zoning Ordinance have designated the first one to two lots on either side of West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue for general commercial use (see figure 2). In addition, the San José General Plan designates West San Carlos Street as a *Mixed Use, Transit-Oriented Development Corridor* and reflects its status as a Neighborhood Business District (NBD) Redevelopment Area. These policies encourage the corridor for retail and office uses and for higher intensity residential uses within the corridor with minimal setbacks. Zoning along West San Carlos Street is a mixture of Light Industrial (LI), General Commerce (GC) and Neighborhood Commercial (CN). None of these districts accommodate the mixture of land uses and development standards preferred by the community and reflected in this *Plan*. The Pedestrian Commercial (CP) Zoning District, however,



Typical existing conditions/lot development pattern.



Typical development pattern **not** appropriate for commercial lot consolidation.



Typical development pattern to be considered on a case-by-case basis for potential commercial/mixed use lot consolidation.

does match community expectations. Over time, most of the commercial corridor properties should probably be rezoned to CP.

Many of these commercially zoned lots are small, narrow and/or shallow. These narrow and shallow lots contribute to the difficulty of significantly improving the commercial corridors. Both the lot sizes and lot configurations make it difficult to redevelop these sites to meet modern day commercial development practice. While lot consolidations are recommended to provide space for necessary commercial amenities, they are not necessarily intended for existing large sites or to create sites for development that is substantially out of scale with surrounding development.

The overall strategy for improving these corridors is to encourage their revitalization to more efficient, attractive, economically viable mixed-use retail/office or commercial/residential configurations coupled with transit improvements.

One approach to enlarging sites for commercial viability is to allow commercial frontage properties to be combined with adjacent residential lots for commercial or mixed use redevelopment oriented to West San Carlos Street or Bascom Avenue. When exercised with full participation of the community and property owners, lot consolidation could benefit economic development in the area by creating larger lots that can accommodate on-site parking and circulation in conjunction with new development. Community members have expressed concern that this approach could result in widespread removal of homes for the purposes of new commercial development. That is not the intention of this *Plan*. For example, residential lots behind com-

mercial lots and facing residential streets are not appropriate for commercial lot consolidation. In addition, lot consolidation should only be explored on a case-by-case basis with property owners. Where lot consolidation occurs, access and circulation should be limited to the commercial frontage and should reduce traffic impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods. Commercial uses would need to provide on-site parking.

Amendments to the General Plan could be proposed to add language in the *Mixed Use, Transit-Oriented Development Corridor* to acknowledge the need for appropriate lot consolidations.

Appropriate lot configurations should be defined as those not involving residential lots facing streets parallel to the commercial corridor or resulting in a major commercial projection (maximum 100 feet) into a residential neighborhood. In addition, the policy's language could reiterate the need for new development to maintain appropriate setbacks, screening, and scale in keeping with the adjacent residential uses.

Revitalization of Underutilized Sites

Many sites along the West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue corridors are underutilized. Older, smaller or vacant buildings occupy many lots along these streets. Many buildings are occupied by marginal retail businesses that cannot afford ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the facilities.

A key improvement strategy is to identify sites and property owners to encourage redevelopment of these marginal sites to more appropriate uses. Many residents feel that the sites occupied with used car lots, auto repair uses, adult retail uses, and second-hand clothing stores are not neighborhood-friendly. Working in partnership with the City of San José Redevelopment Agency and the Business Association, key sites along the corridors should be identified for future intensification. Part of the business improvement effort will also include identification and retention of valued businesses.



Many residents feel that the abundance of used car lots could be better utilized.

Several sites preliminarily identified during the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative process for possible revitalization include among others: the Business Circle on the southwest corner of Bascom Avenue and West San Carlos Street; and a number of used car lots along West San Carlos Street.

In addition, a number of sites were suggested for potential mixed use redevelopment, such as the old bowling alley on the north side of West San Carlos Street, the VTA site in the Midtown area, and the old railroad right-of-way adjacent to the future Vasona light rail stop.

Roadway/Streetscape Improvements

Landscape and streetscape enhancements can help create a pedestrian-friendly environment, improve access to storefronts and provide an attractive retail setting. The overall strategy for improving the street environment is to develop and implement a comprehensive streetscape improvement plan. The streetscape plan should include: landscaping with median plantings and additional street trees (this community has expressed a preference for trees other than palm trees); roadway improvements, such as parking access (driveway curb cuts), improvements to parking lot configurations, sidewalk improvements; and pedestrian elements, including street furniture, pedestrian lighting, newspaper stands, kiosks and banners.

Recently property and business owners, working with the Santa Clara County Planning Department, received \$800,000 in grant funding to implement Phase I of a two-phased landscape improvement master plan for Bascom Avenue. Phase I involves streetscape improvements and landscaping the center median between Parkmoor Avenue and West San Carlos Street. The County Department of Roads and Airports has initiated discussions with the City Department of Transportation to begin an implementation and maintenance strategy for the project. Phase II of the plan will involve street tree planting adjacent to the sidewalks along Bascom Avenue. Phase II had not yet been funded as of April 2002.

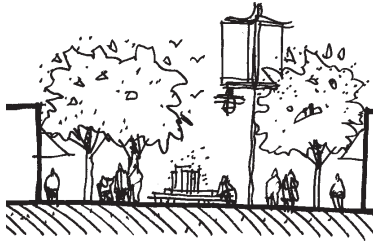
In addition, the City of San José, working with the West San Carlos Business Association, has completed landscape improvements along West San Carlos Street within the street right-of-way.

One of the major barriers to implementing streetscape improvements along West San Carlos Street, is the narrow width of the street right-of-way, and the narrow width of the existing public sidewalks. The narrow public right-of-way dimensions make it difficult to create an attractive, comfortable pedestrian environment along the sidewalks. In addition, major utilities under the existing sidewalks limit the types of plantings possible within the street right-of-way at the sidewalk.

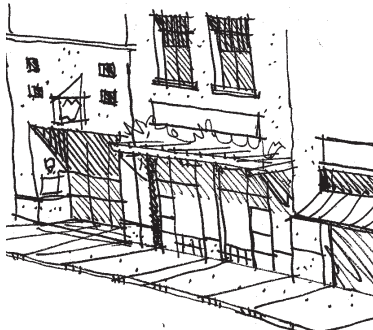
As new development occurs, buildings should be set back from the street at a sufficient depth to allow a wide sidewalk with landscaping and other streetscape elements to be located along the street. Sidewalk widths, including planting areas, should be a minimum 15' wide, but preferably 18'- 20' wide, to make a safe and comfortable area for pedestrians. Parking should be located to the side or rear of new projects, and buildings should be placed at or near the back edge of sidewalks to maintain a continuous street presence.

It should be noted that all of the existing West San Carlos Street City Zoning Districts require more suburban-scaled building setbacks. Only the CP District allows a zero front setback.

An alternative landscape design solution for street improvements would be the use of decorative arbors along the street where narrow sidewalk widths occur or street trees cannot be planted. Arbors can be landscaped with shallow-rooted vines in planter boxes that would not disrupt the utilities under the sidewalk and still provide a green shading element along the street. This design alternative would bring greenery to the street, creating an attractive overhang along the pedestrian walkway, allow a place to attach lighting, and contribute to a unique street front character.



Transit-oriented pocket parks or small plazas with street furniture, lighting and street trees could be located along commercial corridors.



Facade enhancements should be encouraged.

The overall concept for commercial street improvements also encourages development of new small plazas or pocket parks at major transit stops and intersections, where possible (also see the *Parks and Open Space Concept*). These small plazas could serve as small green oases along the street as well as creating attractive entries to new retail businesses.

Building/Façade Enhancement

Another improvement strategy for the retail corridors is to encourage building façade improvements to existing commercial stores along the street.

Many of the existing buildings along the retail corridors are older structures that are not well-maintained. Building facades have been altered and modified through the years with ad-hoc, and often temporary, modifications. Display windows and doorways have often been replaced with outdated design features and materials. Many buildings are in need of paint, new awnings, new display windows and entry features. These older, unmaintained building facades create a shabby, unkempt image and appearance along the retail street.

The City of San José Redevelopment Agency has façade improvement programs available for commercial properties including special low interest loans, and paint programs. In addition, the City can provide assistance in designing attractive renovations to update building façades.

Commercial street frontage improvements can include new façade designs with larger display windows facing the street frontage, fresh paint, new entryways, replacement of façade materials and designs, new awnings, trellises, lighting, and new signage.

Area-wide Clean and Safe Program

Commercial districts are successful in part because they are perceived as safe, clean and attractive places to shop. Thus, a major strategy of the commercial improvement effort is to continue efforts in creating clean and safe streets.

A *Clean and Safe* program could include ongoing street and sidewalk cleaning, use of decorative trash receptacles (cleaned on a regular basis), parking and pedestrian lighting for safety, and increased police or security presence on the street. Many business districts use youth “ambassadors” as added security presence in commercial districts. Ambassadors, dressed in recognizable uniforms can regularly patrol the area on-foot or on bicycles with walkie-talkies connected to the local police department. They can also provide information to shoppers, and help in visual surveillance and clean-up efforts.

Improved Signage

Signage along the commercial corridors also is a major design feature that contributes to the overall character and image of the retail environment along the commercial street. Tastefully designed signs, in scale with buildings, and designed for the speed of the street traffic and the pedestrian environment, help to establish the image of the street as a successful commercial place.

Most of the existing signs along the street are older, uncoordinated and unattractive signs that add to the clutter and visual confusion of the street. Larger, older billboard signs in the area especially detract from the character of the street and adjoining residential neighborhoods. Often, business establishments cover the building display windows with temporary paper advertising signs that add to the unkempt appearance to the area. This window treatment, as well as painted “sales” signs, can create the appearance of a temporary and unhealthy retail climate.

Many of the non-conforming signs and billboards in the area are within the unincorporated pockets. County and City sign regulations are different. Many of the older structures and signs within the County areas have not been as well-maintained. The area is also scattered with a variety of unrelated pole signs of all sizes, shapes and appearances.



Window signage and billboards can detract from the character of the street.



An abundance of large signs can clutter the street.

The primary improvement action is to eliminate non-conforming signs and billboards in the area and develop a set of “sign recommendations” for local businesses that will help to upgrade the appearance of the street and provide name identification for local establishments.

Parking

Easily accessible, and convenient parking is a major requirement of a successful commercial district. Many of the existing lots along Burbank/Del Monte’s commercial corridors lack adequate parking. Parking is frequently unimproved, difficult to access, or non-existent. In many cases the street frontage is congested with numerous and conflicting driveway curb-cuts for entrances and exits.

A key strategy for improving parking in the area is to analyze existing parking along West San Carlos and Bascom, and identify sites and design solutions for increasing parking in the area. Improvement alternatives could consist of the following:

- Provide new parking with more efficient site organization and lay out through lot consolidation and redevelopment, or through improved layout on existing sites.
- Integrate new transit improvements along W. San Carlos. For example, a historic trolley could be coordinated with parking and development sites to encourage people to “shop by trolley” and park in one consolidated location (see top priority action: *Establish a specialty trolley service...in the Strategic Action Plan* section of this document).
- Develop transit nodes along the street integrated with new development and parking lots. These transit nodes can enhance the shopping experience with outdoor seating, landscaping and lighting and other pedestrian amenities.
- Initiate a collaborative effort between the Business Association and the City to identify some parcels for district- wide parking lots. This effort could satisfy parking needs where on-site parking is lacking or difficult to create. Implementation could be accomplished in partnership with the City of San José, through a special parking district with metered parking spaces.
- Incorporate parking into the proposed “freeway park” deck over Interstate-280 (see top priority action: *Conduct a feasibility study*

for developing a “freeway park”...in the Strategic Action Plan section of this document). Surface parking along Bascom Avenue and Parkmoor Avenue (as part of the deck) could be jointly used by commercial businesses along Bascom and “freeway park” uses. Parking could be available only at limited times and could be metered to help offset development costs.

Transit System Improvements

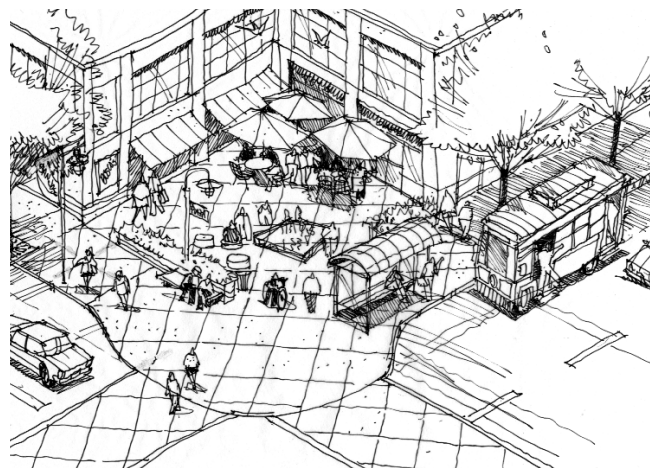
A healthy retail environment is supported by an accessible and effective transportation system. Currently, the Valley Transportation Authority provides bus service along the West San Carlos/Stevens Creek Boulevard and the Bascom Avenue corridors. In addition, the West San Carlos/Stevens Creek corridor is under consideration for study as a future Light Rail corridor. Both the existing bus system and the proposed future light rail corridor connect to the regional multi-modal station at the Diridon Station.

While bus service is provided along West San Carlos and Bascom, the frequency of the bus routes is limited. The overall improvement concept aims to strengthen these transit connections along the retail corridors to reinforce the retail activity along the street.

Improvements to the transportation system could be made to enhance the shopping experience while improving transit ridership.

A major goal of this plan is to improve transit service in the area and strongly support VTA's efforts to complete a “Corridor Study” for light rail feasibility along the West San Carlos/Stevens Creek Boulevard Corridor.

In the interim, a top priority for the community is to provide additional transit service in the form of a “historic trolley” that could run on a more continuous basis, making connections between Downtown San José, the multi-modal Diridon Station, San José City College, Santa



Benches, covered bus shelters, trash receptacles, newspaper vending machines and informational kiosks could be located at primary commercial transit stops.

Clara Valley Medical Center, Valley Fair Shopping Center and the Santana Row development on the Winchester Boulevard corridor. The use of these special buses or motorized trolleys would help create a unique shopping environment, while adding transit service for visitors and the neighborhood. Trolley stops should be coordinated with transit activity nodes and proposed plazas/pocket parks at major intersections.



Potential trolley stops should be coordinated with transit activity nodes and proposed plazas/pocket parks at major intersections.

Housing Revitalization

Burbank/Del Monte is one of the oldest residential neighborhoods in San José. The first residential tracts were planned in 1904, and by 1960 the area was heavily developed. The earliest homes built in the Burbank/Del Monte area were small, single-family one-story homes with one or two bedrooms and no garages. Many modest-sized bungalows and tract homes with one-car garages were built between 1930 and 1946. Over the years, multi-family housing was often built on lots originally intended to support single-family homes.

Because of the early development patterns in this area and the variation in County and City standards, the existing site layout/design often does not effectively reflect modern day needs.

Early standards for multi-family residential development were minimal, and did not include requirements for parking, open space, or other site amenities, such as landscaping. And, early neighborhood development did not consistently provide for installation of curbs, gutters and sidewalks.

As a result of this development history, many older homes in the neighborhood are now deteriorating, open space is scarce, parking is inadequate and site amenities are minimal. The current economic climate exacerbates this situation, with multiple families frequently living in housing units intended for a single family. Absentee landlords and lack of on-site rental property management also contribute to substandard housing/living conditions. These conditions have depressed housing values and attracted some undesirable uses to the area.

Major objectives for neighborhood residents are to improve the overall condition and appearance of housing in the neighborhood; provide attractive, transit-oriented and affordable housing options; and encourage appropriate maintenance of properties (see figure 7).



Today there are standards for new developments to ensure: space for parking, appropriate set-backs, usable open space for multi-family complexes, landscaping and other site amenities. However, these standards only apply to *new* development in an area where vacant lots available for new construction are scarce. Therefore, the challenge of improving housing in the area relies in large part on improving existing housing and identifying opportunities for redevelopment.

Overall, revitalizing housing in Burbank/Del Monte will require a long-term, multi-faceted approach that addresses housing issues from a variety of angles. Major strategies include:

- Strengthen existing programs that support home improvement, such as housing rehabilitation programs;
- Develop renovation guidelines to enhance the character and architectural style of existing homes in the area;
- Target blighted housing or underutilized sites for redevelopment;
- Develop new transit-oriented housing, including affordable units, along major transit corridors and at light rail transit stations;
- Strengthen code enforcement to help maintain a clean and safe residential environment; and
- Improve communication between landlords and tenants.

The improvement concept for improving housing in the Burbank/Del Monte planning area consists of focusing housing stock improvement efforts in several key residential areas (Sherman Oaks - south and west of San José City College, Burbank, Buena Vista, and the southern portions of Shasta-Hanchett and St. Leo's). It also includes exploring opportunities for developing mixed use transit-oriented housing (including affordable units) in conjunction with transit stops along the West San Carlos Street transit corridor, along the Vasona Light Rail line and in the Midtown area south of West San Carlos Street between Meridian Avenue and Race Street.

Housing Rehabilitation Programs

Maximizing incentives for property and building upgrades is an important way to encourage near-term physical improvements to housing in the neighborhood. The City and the County both offer housing rehabilitation programs to encourage homeowners to improve their properties. The County's Housing and Community Development Department provides low-interest loans for housing rehabilitation to low-income residents and for owners of rental properties occupied by lower income persons. The City's rehabilitation assistance is more extensive in terms of the financial and programmatic resources they can provide. City programs offer low-interest home improvement loans and grants for low to moderate-income property owners of both single-family and multi-family housing (up to 8 units). This financial assistance can be used for housing improvements ranging from practical utility upgrades to aesthetic improvements, such as exterior paint, landscaping, fencing and driveway repairs. These programs are also available to landlords who rent to income-eligible tenants.

Creating an aggressive outreach strategy for distributing information about these housing rehabilitation programs may help target those individuals who could benefit most from this type of program. An outreach strategy would include distribution of application materials and information at neighborhood association meetings, door-to-door contact throughout the neighborhood, and marketing at neighborhood events, such as the annual Del Monte/West San Carlos Street Jamboree. Developing housing rehabilitation applications seminars could be instrumental in helping property owners complete and submit applications for City rehabilitation loans and grants.

Associations can also assist housing revitalization efforts by identifying properties in their area that could benefit from the programs and sharing information with those property owners and tenants.

Another means of encouraging residents to take an active role in beautifying their homes is to initiate an awards program to recognize exceptional efforts in home and landscape improvements in the neighborhood. An awards program can be developed through

neighborhood associations in partnership with the City.

Recognizing neighborhood achievements in home revitalization also provides opportunities for neighbors to meet one another and for neighborhood associations to recruit new members.

Increasing home ownership can gradually help improve housing stock since homeowners have more to gain in keeping their homes attractive and well-maintained. The City of San José offers a first-time homebuyers' reference guide that links potential homeowners with lenders who offer special assistance to first-time buyers.

Rental assistance programs could be beneficial in enabling low-income families to bridge the financial gap in paying for a single family home. Assisting these families could ultimately have a positive affect on overcrowding and parking congestion in the area.



There are many unique old homes in the area.

Renovation Guidelines

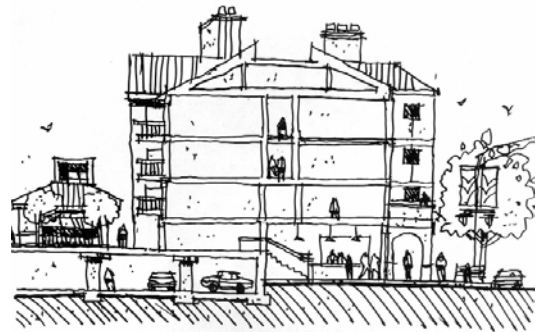
Burbank/Del Monte is rich with a variety of historic architectural styles, including Bungalow, Craftsman, Colonial Revival, Tudor, Victorian and Eichler. A key strategy in preserving the integrity of these unique homes is to develop a homeowners' improvement manual with renovation guidelines and recommendations specific to these architectural styles. The manual should clearly diagram and describe recommendations for accentuating exterior architectural details and making additions, alterations and repairs to these homes in keeping with their distinct character.

Housing Redevelopment

A long-term improvement strategy for providing attractive, safe housing in the area while improving the quality of life in the neighborhood, is to redevelop blighted or underutilized properties with the most efficient site planning and the highest caliber housing design standards. This housing redevelopment concept involves identifying significantly blighted, abandoned or vacant properties,

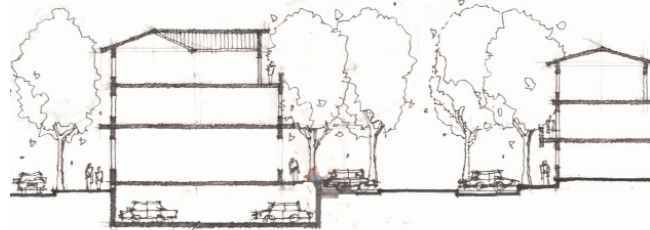
purchasing lots from willing property sellers, consolidating lots where feasible, relocating residents where necessary (ideally with options to reoccupy units at affordable rates), demolishing old buildings and constructing new, more attractive housing with adequate parking, open space and site amenities. This strategy allows for complete building redesign and site reconfiguration, providing an opportunity to build housing that conforms to modern development standards, reflects today's lifestyles, and fits with the character and scale of the neighborhood.

New development would adhere to standards requiring adequate parking to support new dwelling units, appropriate set-backs, usable open space, landscaping and other site amenities. In order to maximize living and open space, building alternatives featuring underground or podium parking should be explored. New building designs and renovations should include features such as front porches, entryways and windows facing the street to create a more residential character and promote safe streets. Building styles should remain consistent with existing residential character, with sloped roofs and materials that reflect the surroundings. Multi-family residences, especially where adjacent to smaller scale single family residences, should be set-back appropriately from the street and upper levels should be stepped-back in height to respect the residential scale (Also see City of San José General Plan and Residential Design Guidelines).



Building alternatives featuring underground or podium parking should be explored.

In order to develop the most functional and economically viable projects, potential redevelopment sites must be large enough to accommodate the necessary parking, set-backs and open space. Creating an inventory or database of blighted properties and vacant lots would help in organizing efforts to move forward on redevelopment opportunities as they arise.



New buildings should be stepped back in height to respect residential scale.

During preliminary discussions with community members, Richmond, Menker, Bascom, Laswell, and Basile were suggested as streets to begin evaluating blighted housing for potential improvement.

Developing a comprehensive strategy for upgrading existing, blighted multi-family buildings through such means as pro-bono conceptual design work and other incentives, would also be beneficial in encouraging private investment improvements.



New housing should provide convenient connections to the multi-modal Diridon Station.

TRANSIT-ORIENTED HOUSING

Since the neighborhood suffers from traffic congestion and limited parking, it is critical for any new multi-family or mixed use housing in the area to be tied to public transit, and to provide adequate parking and open space. The housing revitalization concept encourages intensification of housing along major transit corridors, such as West San Carlos Street, and around light rail stations. New transit-oriented housing should provide:

- Convenient access to light rail and public transportation stops;
- Adequate on-site parking;
- On-site private open space, such as decks, balconies, courtyards and play areas, as well as public open space or in-lieu fees consistent with development park dedication standards;
- Building design scale and character that respects the surrounding residential neighborhood in terms of style, height, mass and materials.

Long-term, intensification of housing around transit corridors/light rail stations reduces the burden on local traffic flow, parking and overcrowding. Some transit-oriented development is already planned in the Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood near the old Del Monte site, in the Midtown area at Meridian and Auzerais, and around the Diridon Station. The new multi-modal Diridon Station will provide regional and local transportation connections, including ACE Train, CalTrain, Amtrak, future BART and Vasona light rail lines, VTA buses and the proposed West San Carlos Street trolley. Additional mixed/residential use projects could be clustered around these sites.

Sites that are especially conducive to mixed use and transit-oriented development are those that front major commercial spines, such as W. San Carlos Street, are adjacent to existing or proposed light rail stations, and offer convenient freeway access. Contingent upon economic feasibility studies and property owner cooperation, other areas/sites where this type of mixed use transit-oriented infill development might occur include:

- Underutilized or possibly blighted properties along West San Carlos Street coupled with transit improvements (for example, the old bowling alley site between Buena Vista and Willard);
- The VTA site just west of Del Monte and south of West San Carlos;
- Sites around the future Del Monte light rail stop;
- Sites around the future Fruitdale light rail stop; and

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Community members acknowledged a need to continue to provide affordable housing in the area. The housing revitalization concept supports a mix of affordable rental and owner-occupied units as well as market-rate housing. Since lower income families rely more regularly on public transit, it is especially imperative that new affordable housing is located adjacent to transportation corridors. Affordable housing would also need to meet design standards with regard to scale and character, parking, open space and other site amenities.

Where there are willing sellers, the San José Redevelopment Agency and the City's Housing Department may be able to collaborate on projects for lot consolidations and land purchases.

The Housing Department could participate in redevelopment projects and provide a certain percent of affordable housing, using



Artist's rendering of a conceptual mixed use, transit-oriented corridor.

Redevelopment housing set-aside funds. In this way, the City can use set-aside funds to leverage projects to help developers provide new affordable housing units.

REVITALIZATION PLAN FOR RICHMOND-MENKER APARTMENTS

One area identified as needing significant improvement is the Richmond-Menker apartment complex. The poor condition of these apartments is of particular concern to Burbank/Del Monte residents. Richmond-Menker consists of 31 four-unit buildings with 12 different property owners. With roughly 600 people living in this one-block locale, the area suffers from overcrowding, insufficient parking, and lack of open space. Litter, illegal dumping, stray shopping carts and graffiti are also ongoing problems. Multiple property owners and a lack of regular on-site supervision/management compound these blighted conditions. Recently, many of the Richmond-Menker property owners formed a property owners' association to begin developing a proposal for improvements. These improvements might include site amenities such as landscaping, security gate installation and children's play space. The association is currently working with the City of San José to create a conceptual design and to explore possible funding options.

In addition to these improvements, developing a more detailed revitalization strategy for this sizable multi-family housing complex would help concentrate longer-term efforts, ultimately creating a more significant impact for tenants and the surrounding community. The apartments would benefit not only from aesthetic improvements such as landscaping, lighting and building façade enhancements, but also from site improvements, such as improved access and circulation, reconfiguration of parking, and the addition of private open space.

With the cooperation of the newly organized Richmond-Menker Property Owners' Association as well as tenants and other stakeholders (such as the Richmond-Menker Action Task Force, PACT - People Acting in Community Together, and Sherman Oaks Elementary School), an improvement planning process, which addresses both physical and social issues, should be initiated to

identify an overall vision and goals for a revitalization project and to develop a concept plan for improvements. This plan would be especially beneficial in grant/funding solicitation efforts.

Several approaches to consider as a means of addressing physical improvements at Richmond-Menker are outlined below. All of these prospective approaches need to be coupled with continued strong Code Enforcement practices (see Code Enforcement, the next heading in this section). In addition, regardless of whatever improvement approach is deemed most appropriate, unified, on-site professional management is critical.

1. The most feasible scenario would be to initiate a coordinated rehabilitation and maintenance program for the property owners, with assistance from the City, building tenants and surrounding neighbors. This approach would require legal agreements (such as Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions) between owners, which would legally bind existing and future owners to an agreed-upon program.
2. Another approach involves redeveloping a couple of centrally-located Richmond-Menker parcels in order to provide additional parking and open space for the remaining units. This would allow some site planning flexibility, but might not be economically viable since it would mean relocating tenants and creating non-income generating uses on the site. Gaining participation and cooperation from multiple property owners and stakeholders may also be challenging.
3. A more aggressive approach involves completely redeveloping the collection of buildings. This would require willingness on the part of the current property owners to negotiate an agreement for the Redevelopment Agency to buy out existing property owners and subsidize the redevelopment investment. This would allow the site to be organized more efficiently as a whole, to reflect modern standards and better serve the needs of today's tenants. A potential design scheme might include underground

parking, improved access, appropriate set-backs, and usable on-site open space. Although redevelopment would allow for maximum, efficient use of the site, this approach is costly, with relocation costs for existing tenants adding to overall project costs.

4. A controversial approach that would require extensive community discussion and traffic analysis would be to redesign the streets, using portions of streets and adjacent properties to provide additional parking. For example, one scenario might include a one-way loop around the apartments with diagonal parking, street closures north of the church and connections south of the church.

Code Enforcement

Code enforcement plays a critical role in maintaining clean and safe residential environments. Both the City and County have code enforcement offices. However, the City's program is far more extensive. For example, based on residents' concern with regard to trash, overflowing garbage receptacles, illegal dumping and graffiti in the area, City code enforcement officials will be conducting neighborhood or "driveway" tours through City areas to address code violations on neighborhood properties (see *Neighborhood Beautification: Enforcement & Regulations* heading for a more detailed description).

In addition to the exterior blight that City Code Enforcement inspectors will be pinpointing during their "Driveway" tours, there are also interior maintenance conditions in many units that need to be addressed on an ongoing basis. Living units that have suffered from deferred maintenance over the years may have serious health and safety problems, such as electrical or plumbing in disrepair, broken appliances, or even rodent/insect infestations. Although complaint-basis inspections are available in the City, many tenants either may not realize that this service is available, or may be afraid to report problems for fear of losing their housing or jeopardizing

their relationship with their landlord. Establishing a regular pattern of annual, City Code Enforcement inspections, at least for more consistently blighted residences, would help resolve many of these issues. Providing code enforcement and multi-lingual tenant rights information (also see *Tenant/Property Owner Communications* below) to tenants and to ensure anonymity in complaint reports could also help tenants feel more comfortable about reporting problems.

Improving enforcement includes ensuring that the community has a working knowledge of the regulations and that there is open and continuous communication between neighborhood residents, property owners and City enforcement officials. Developing a citizens' guide to City codes may be helpful in educating residents about their responsibilities and describing how residents can help contribute to neighborhood beautification. An aggressive outreach campaign to distribute such a guide should include door-to-door distribution to target properties that could benefit most from information about improving blight and avoiding code penalties.

Landlord/Tenant Communications

Strengthening education and communication between tenants, landlords, and building managers improves housing conditions and builds positive relationships. The City's *Project Blossom* program offers a number of educational seminars related to improving private property. They provide training seminars for tenants and landlords, and a property management seminar that provides property managers and owners with basic management techniques for screening tenants, writing rental contracts, enforcing house rules, and conducting routine maintenance. Tenant seminars are designed to educate renters about their responsibilities and how they can help in the routine upkeep of their units. At the completion of the training seminars, *Project Blossom* staff assist property owners in the formation and organization of property owners associations. A key component of this program is facilitating coordinated management of rental properties. Interested property owners should contact *Project Blossom* directly (408-977-0159 ext. 207).

The City's Neighborhood Development Center offers a popular tenant/landlord conflict resolution program for rent-controlled properties that would benefit from expansion to include non-rent-controlled properties. Clarifying responsibilities and improving communication between tenants and landlords helps ensure that owners maintain their properties and that tenants avoid "doubling-up" and overcrowding properties. Increasing staffing in this rental dispute program would help support additional outreach to the area, increasing the effectiveness of the program.

In order to protect tenants from undue eviction, a strategy for "just cause eviction" should be explored. Such a strategy could require landlords to report all eviction notices, explaining why tenants were evicted and indicating rent charged for a given unit at the time of eviction compared with rent charged for the same unit after evicting a tenant. This would help flag and address undue evictions. This kind of service is especially needed for low-income tenants who cannot afford to hire lawyers.

Neighborhood Beautification

The overall appearance of a neighborhood contributes to the “quality of life” and livability of the area. Currently, many portions of the Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood would benefit from landscaping, streetscape enhancements and improved maintenance. Some areas suffer from excess debris, overflowing dumpsters, stray shopping carts, graffiti and illegal dumping. Many streets lack street trees and landscaping. Amending these conditions and highlighting neighborhood attributes, such as historic landmarks, will improve the neighborhood’s image.

An objective of this *Improvement Plan* is to beautify residential and commercial areas and improve the ambiance of the neighborhood. Improving Burbank/Del Monte’s overall appearance will build community pride, increase property values and help make the area a more pleasant place to live, work and play (see figure 8).

This improvement concept is closely related to other improvement concepts in the *Plan*, such as Economic Development, Circulation and Transportation, and Parks and Community Facilities. Improvements in these areas will have an impact on overall neighborhood beautification. Many of the Neighborhood Beautification Concepts are programmatic. The programs work in conjunction with physical design solutions to improve the overall appearance of Burbank/Del Monte.

Neighborhood beautification involves these main strategies:

- Improve landscaping and the street environment;
- Preserve historic character;
- Intensify neighborhood clean-up efforts;
- Maintain continued, strong enforcement of municipal regulations; and
- Strengthen Neighborhood/Property Owners’ Associations.

Landscaping

The Neighborhood Beautification concept includes planting additional street trees and landscaping in residential neighborhoods, as well as along major thoroughfares, such as Bascom Avenue, Leigh Avenue, Race Street, Fruitdale Avenue, and West San Carlos Street, the area's primary commercial corridor.



Some parts of the neighborhood enjoy mature street trees.



Neighborhood tree plantings can be organized to infill street trees.

RESIDENTIAL LANDSCAPING

Some parts of Burbank/Del Monte's residential neighborhoods already enjoy mature street trees, while other areas could benefit from new plantings or infill plantings to create attractive, canopy-lined streets. As the proposed pocket park-lined, pedestrian spine through the neighborhood, Scott Street/Auzerais Avenue is a high priority for additional residential street tree planting.

Planting trees in planter strips along the public right-of-way on residential streets requires consent by adjacent property owners, who are ultimately responsible for care of street trees. This improvement concept for developing tree-lined residential streets therefore, relies on property owners being willing to take responsibility in caring for street trees. Neighborhood associations can take the lead in developing a residential planting plan that would identify locations for proposed street tree plantings and confirm willing participants.

For residential street tree types, community members favor large-scale trees with broad canopies. Neighborhood associations should work with the City arborist's office to determine appropriate tree species that meet these criteria. Informed selection is important because some species are susceptible to disease, can damage streets and sidewalks, and may create maintenance problems. The arborist's office has developed a street tree planting list to ensure that street trees selected will be compatible with given conditions. Planting permits designating the size and type of tree(s) to be planted should be obtained from the Department of Transportation (these are free-of-charge).

After identifying street tree deficiencies, tree types, and interested participants, neighborhood associations can organize street tree planting events. These could involve collaboration among all Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood associations and might be combined with other neighborhood social activities (such as Earth Day, Arbor Day, or other neighborhood clean-up or beautification events).

Our City Forest, a local non-profit organization, works with individuals and neighborhood groups to facilitate tree planting projects. As San José's "one-stop shop" for tree planting, *Our City Forest* provides site assessments, species selections, tree care plans, as well as necessary permits and clearances. Neighborhood associations and individuals are encouraged to call *Our City Forest* directly (408-99-TREES) to inquire about their services.

An area that residents have pinpointed for tree replacement is along the western edge of Sherman Oaks Charter School near Fruitdale Avenue. The small Crape Myrtles that are planted there now are not well-suited to the scale of the adjacent architecture or streetscape. Tall canopy trees could help distinguish the school as a neighborhood landmark.

In addition to street trees, residential landscape improvements can also be incorporated in the design of traffic calming components that may be developed in the future, (as deemed appropriate), such as islands and bulb-outs/chokers.

Small groves of fruit trees should be integrated into parks or new developments where possible. These small-scale orchards would be intended to reflect Burbank/Del Monte's rich agricultural heritage and the orchards that were once prevalent in the area. Parks, such as the proposed urban transit-oriented parks or residential pocket parks could include this type of ornamental planting.



Traffic circles can serve to calm traffic and feature attractive landscaping.



Existing landscape improvements on West San Carlos Street.

THOROUGHFARES/COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR LANDSCAPING

The *Neighborhood Beautification* concept also includes street tree plantings for major thoroughfares, such as Fruitdale Avenue (The intersection of Fruitdale and Meridian Avenues especially needs improved landscaping and maintenance), Leigh Avenue, Race Street, and commercial corridors, West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue. As a highly visible area and gateway to the neighborhood, landscaping on both sides of Interstate-280 along Moorpark and Parkmoor could also benefit from a major upgrade.

As with the preferred residential street tree types, residents also prefer tall canopy trees for plantings along major thoroughfares. Tree height would allow visibility of businesses, and broad canopies would provide shade and an attractive overhead accent. Many residents are opposed to the use of Palm trees as street trees. Detailed streetscape improvement plans should be developed for West San Carlos Street, Fruitdale Avenue, Leigh Avenue, and Race Street. (For more detail on West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue enhancements, also see *Streetscape/Roadway Improvements* under the *Economic Development Concept*). Creative means of enhancing street parking, such as by incorporating planters with street trees in the right-of-way should also be explored.

Santa Clara County recently received a grant to help implement a streetscape Master Plan for Bascom Avenue between West San Carlos Boulevard and Interstate-280. The Master Plan, developed in 2000 with the cooperation of Burbank community members, outlines a two-phased process for implementing streetscape improvements. These improvements include: canopy tree and accent tree plantings in the median as well as between curbs and sidewalks, as well as median, sidewalk and bus stop improvements.¹ Part of the *Neighborhood Beautification* strategy involves carrying out the improvements specified in the Bascom Avenue Streetscape Master Plan.

¹ Sugimura & Associates Architects/Santa Clara County Department of Road and Airports, Burbank Community Streetscape Master Plan. San José, CA 2000.

Street Environment

The overall image of the neighborhood will be enhanced by creating a coordinated rhythm of design, through the use of street furniture, lighting, attractive signage, landscaping, and public art.

LIGHTING IMPROVEMENTS

Incorporating distinctive street lighting near San José City College, especially along Leigh and Moorpark Avenues, may create a safer, more attractive pedestrian environment and will help establish a pattern of design unity in the area. Through community meetings, and perhaps by presenting potential lighting design alternatives on neighborhood association websites, residents could select a lighting fixture design that is consistent with neighborhood aesthetics. Funding sources need to be explored. The formation of a special assessment district could help to offset costs of new fixtures.

The Beverly Tract Lighting Committee was recently awarded \$194,000 by the County for lighting improvements along Arleta, Raymond (between Scott and Parkmoor) and portions of Basile (from Bascom to Raymond).

PUBLIC ART

Community members highlighted the importance of integrating creative art in the neighborhood. Initiating a program where a certain percentage of new development projects could be allocated toward public art would expand opportunities for developing public art projects in the neighborhood.

Public art can contribute to a sense of identity for the neighborhood. For example, a mural depicting Burbank/Del Monte's historic past could enhance a public space and provide a connection to the past. Incorporating murals, sculptures, artistic gateway monuments or other special design elements into streetscapes and public places can help stylistically tie the neighborhood together.



Creative projects, such as sculptural metalwork could be integrated into neighborhood public spaces.



Sculptures and fountains contribute to an attractive commercial environment.

Residents should identify potential sites appropriate for painting murals and displaying other public art features, and should continue to be involved in decisions regarding selection of public art displays. Forming an arts action team could be an effective way to ensure that the work of local artists and children are being displayed in the community. Local artists should be encouraged to teach art in the community and to create artistic pieces for the neighborhood.

FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS

A key strategy related to neighborhood beautification, involves improving the appearance of commercial facades along West San Carlos Street and Bascom Avenue (also see the *Economic Development* section of this document). Many of the facades along West San Carlos and Bascom are unappealing and could benefit from new awnings, trim, paint or other renovations. As part of the San José Redevelopment Agency's Neighborhood Business District program, the agency has been working with the West San Carlos Business Association to implement a façade improvement program to address some of these design issues. A recent example of such a collaborative effort, is the façade improvement project at the shopping center on the north side of West San Carlos Street near Leigh Avenue.



Many commercial facades could benefit from new awnings.

SIGNAGE

Commercial signage also contributes to a well-integrated neighborhood character. Developing a strategy for eliminating billboards, improving the sign code, and strengthening code enforcement for private business signs will support the neighborhood beautification objective.

UTILITY LINES

Utility lines clutter the horizon, obstructing views, and conflicting with street tree plantings. Undergrounding utility lines, particularly along Scott Street, Fruitdale Avenue, in the Buena Vista area, and south of City College between Rexford Way and Fruitdale Avenue,

would enhance the overall appearance of the Burbank/Del Monte street environment.

Because of the potentially high cost to individual home owners (approximately 3.5 million dollars per mile), alternative funding sources for utility relocation need to be identified. Formation of a tax assessment district for undergrounding utilities should be explored. Due to the current energy crisis and lack of funding, the feasibility of this improvement action is uncertain. However, utility relocation remains a long-term goal.

Historic Character

Another means of improving the overall attractiveness of residential neighborhoods in the area is to preserve unique features that help characterize the area. Burbank/Del Monte boasts many historic elements that add to the richness of the neighborhood: the Del Monte water tower; the Burbank theater marquis; bungalow homes, and other homes with distinctive architecture; and traditional brick warehouse buildings.

The Del Monte tower and the Burbank theater marquis are neighborhood landmarks that should be preserved and accentuated to highlight the uniqueness of the area and retain a part of neighborhood history.

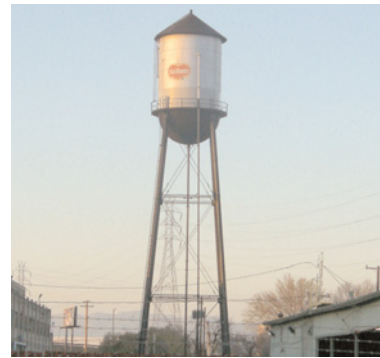
Architectural styles in the neighborhood include: Bungalow, Craftsman, Colonial Revival, Tudor and Victorian.² Owners are encouraged to make improvements to these special homes in keeping with their original architectural style and scale.

One way of strengthening this effort would be to do an assessment of the area with the objective of adding qualifying structures to the City's Historic Resources Inventory. Another strategy is to develop a homeowners' improvement manual with renovation guidelines

²Munawarjit Kaur. The Burbank Case Study. San José, CA 1999.



Brickwork on the 1920s Cahill/Diridon train depot.



The signature Del Monte Cannery water tower.



The Burbank Theater marquis.

and recommendations specific to these architectural styles, which will educate homeowners about maintaining historic features and enhancing historic character (also see the *Housing Revitalization* section under the heading *Renovation Guidelines*). As a general rule, surrounding development should not dwarf or overshadow these homes, but should respect their scale and mass.

Early 20th century masonry buildings should be retrofitted where possible. Community members would like to maintain the character of these early brick buildings and reuse them as appropriate.

Burbank residents enjoy the special historic features in the neighborhood, and creating incentives for historic preservation and restoration will benefit the entire community.



Residents outlined a need for clean-up efforts.

Neighborhood Clean-Up Efforts

Visible accumulations of trash and large bulky waste, improper storage of garbage/recycling receptacles, stray shopping carts and graffiti all detract from neighborhood livability. Lack of maintenance also creates a perception of resident disinterest that can attract crime to the area.

Neighborhood clean-up strategies encompass a variety of solutions, ranging from initiating bulky waste pick-up events to expanding volunteerism and intensifying outreach efforts for existing programs (also see top priority action: *Initiate a regular annual bulky waste pick-up, and hold more neighborhood clean-up events* under the *Strategic Action Plan* section of this document).

KEY CLEAN-UP SITES

There are several sites in the Burbank area that often exhibit excessive trash, broken bottles, overflowing dumpsters and unwanted household debris. These sites include (see figure 8):

- The Richmond-Menker multi-family housing area;
- Park Avenue between Race Street and Bird Avenue, especially near the bus stops at Lincoln and Park;
- Page Avenue near Scott (Buena Vista);

- The Chiechi-Willard area;
- The alleyway behind Business Circle;
- The vacant lot used by San José City College students for overflow parking at the corner of Moorpark and Bascom;
- Fruitdale and Meridian;
- The railroad track at the Del Monte cannery; and
- Hannah Street at the Freeway.

Holding more community pride projects (clean-ups, neighborhood plantings, block parties) in these particular areas would allow residents an opportunity to meet one another and build their skills and interest as neighborhood stewards.

Organizing more clean-up events around the neighborhood as a whole will improve the overall cleanliness and perception of the area. The Neighborhood Development Center recently developed a “how-to” guide called, *Let’s Talk Trash*, that outlines the process for organizing a neighborhood clean-up event. This guide is a valuable resource, especially for neighborhood associations who have never run a clean-up event. The Neighborhood Development Center (408-277-5350), Council Offices and Code Enforcement Officers could also be instrumental in facilitating clean-up events.

ILLEGAL DUMPING

Illegal dumping repeatedly occurs in certain areas of the Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood, such as around the Richmond-Menker apartments, near the railroad track at the Del Monte cannery and in the Chiechi-Willard area.

At Richmond-Menker, illegal dumping into the gutter of used car oil and other auto mechanic waste products, such as filters, oil cans, nuts and bolts have been frequently reported. And, large bulky waste, such as old furniture and household appliances, are often inappropriately discarded in front of properties.

Seemingly unattended sites are often used as dumping grounds. Mattresses, garbage bags and trash have been reported in the area around the railroad track near the Del Monte cannery. Homeless encampments are also an issue here. A parking area behind a tall fence in the Chiechi-Willard neighborhood is frequently used for illegal dumping as well. These areas tend to attract this type of behavior because they are somewhat removed or screened from visual surveillance. More aggressive monitoring of these areas and timely response to dumping may help curb illegal dumping activity. Illegal dumping in the street right-of-way should be reported to the Department of Transportation (408-277-4373) and illegal dumping on private property or along Union Pacific Railroad should be reported to the City's SNI Code Enforcement Inspector (408-277-5828).

Another strategy for curbing illegal dumping where household bulky waste is concerned is to provide more opportunities to conveniently discard of bulky waste items, such as old appliances and furniture. Residents would like to initiate a regular City-sponsored annual bulky waste pick-up free-of-charge for items normally excluded from traditional waste collection (also see top priority action: *Initiate a regular annual bulky waste pick-up, and hold more neighborhood clean-up events* under the *Strategic Action Plan* section of this document). Providing a convenient means of disposing of bulky waste should make utilizing the pick-up program a more attractive option than the illegal dumping alternative.

The City also currently offers the Recycle Plus program for disposal of large household items (408-277-2700). This program provides for an arranged pick-up of up to three large bulky waste items for only \$18. The Recycle Plus program and the proposed annual bulky waste pick-up should be aggressively publicized to ensure maximum participation.

STREET SWEEPING

To create a more attractive street environment and ensure that Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood streets are well-swept, the City's Department of Transportation will be doubling street sweeping service in the City portions of the neighborhood (to twice per month) beginning in the summer of 2002.

North Delmar at Rexford Way and Marlboro Court in particular have been identified as needing improved street sweeping. Parked cars along Hannah Street often interfere with routine street sweeping. Posting street sweeping parking regulation signs along Hannah Street would help control this parking/sweeping conflict.

SHOPPING CARTS

The Chiechi-Willard area, along Willard Avenue near Scott Street, and the Richmond-Menker area are especially burdened with stray shopping carts. It is not uncommon to find 10–20 shopping carts per week at the Richmond-Menker apartments. Some carts are left turned over on front lawns and sidewalks, adding to the disheveled look of the area.

Taking shopping carts off-site is usually the result of lower income tenants who do not own cars relying on the carts as a means to transport groceries by foot. Holding a community meeting focused on the stray shopping cart issue will be beneficial in exploring possible constructive solutions. The City's Code Enforcement division has a list of merchants that will sell foldable shopping convenience carts at a reduced cost to their customers who need them.

In addition, the City has a program coordinated with local grocery stores to pick up stray shopping carts. Shopping carts in need of pick-up should be reported by calling the City's Call Center hotline (408-277-4000).

GRAFFITI

A number of areas where graffiti has been consistently found include: Page Avenue near Scott Street; the Chiechi-Willard area; Park Avenue between Race Street and Bird Avenue, especially near the bus stops at Lincoln and Park; the alleyway behind Business Circle; the vacant lot at the corner of Moorpark and Bascom; and the Richmond-Menker apartments (including a large boulder that is used as a gang marker). Immediate graffiti clean-up efforts should target these problematic sites.

The City's Neighborhood Action and Anti-graffiti programs and the County's Graffiti Abatement program have made positive contributions to neighborhood clean-up efforts.

The City's programs are effective because of volunteer support. The Neighborhood Action program (408-277-4133) is offered by the San José Police Department that teaches residents to monitor public nuisances, drug/gang-related nuisances and blighted properties. The Anti-graffiti program (408-277-2758) aims to prevent and remove graffiti through education, eradication and enforcement. This group can remove graffiti in the public right-of-way. While residential and commercial property owners are responsible for removing graffiti from their property, they can receive advice and free paint through the anti-graffiti program. Encouraging rapid community response to graffiti and recruiting additional volunteers for these programs will help reduce graffiti in the area.

Similar to the City's programs, the goal of the County's Graffiti Abatement program for unincorporated areas is rapid removal of graffiti from public and private property. The County's four-step program includes: eradicating graffiti, empowering the community against graffiti, educating youth about the consequences associated with graffiti, and enforcement of graffiti laws. The County's graffiti abatement ordinance requires property owners to remove graffiti from their property within five days and provides free paint and a

cost recovery program to owners who have been a victim of vandalism. The program also sponsors an adopt-a-block program for volunteers. For more information call the Graffiti Abatement program office (408-299-5746) or the Graffiti Hotline (408-299-5777).

Enforcement and Regulations

In responding to the community's priority to improve the appearance of the neighborhood, the City's Code Enforcement Department recently assigned "Driveway Teams" to tour City portions of the Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood and identify code violations. These proactive teams are focused on rapid response to conditions that create visual blight.

This "Driveway Team" approach utilizes an effective combination of education and enforcement. Residents first receive a letter of notification about the upcoming neighborhood tour and a description of codes that need to be adhered to. Neighbors then have time to correct any violations before the assigned tour. If violations are observed during the tour, courtesy warning letters will be sent to property owners advising them to make necessary corrections by a specified date. Inspectors will then revisit sites after the compliance date and any violations that have not been corrected may be subject to an Administrative Citation with fines ranging from \$75–\$500.

A tour in the Sherman Oaks neighborhood within the Burbank/Del Monte area took place on January 28, 2002 and another tour is planned for late summer, 2002. The City has already added two additional "Driveway Team" inspectors for the 2001/2002 budget year, however, increasing the number of inspectors in future budget years would ensure that this constructive work continues.

Adding to the challenge of improving the appearance of Burbank/Del Monte, about half of the planning area is unincorporated, and the County does not have the resources to provide addi-

tional code enforcement services. Currently, Santa Clara County has only three code enforcement inspectors for its entire 250 square mile area of “County pockets” between Palo Alto and Gilroy. This reflects the County’s primary responsibility as stewards of welfare, law and justice, rather than of neighborhood services. Since the City does not have jurisdiction over County pockets, neighborhood associations in unincorporated areas can play a larger role in improving their neighborhoods by creating community-initiated programs, applying for beautification grants and forming assessment districts.

Neighborhood/Property Owners’ Associations

Ideally, rather than relying on the City for implementation actions and enforcement, residents and property owners would act as stewards of their neighborhoods - maintaining their residences to the extent possible, and helping to nurture the health of their community.

One of the primary objectives of the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative is to empower community members to be proactive leaders and stewards of positive neighborhood change. In order to encourage ongoing participation, education, outreach, and a strong network of communication are essential.

The City recognizes that no one will shepherd improvements to the neighborhood more vehemently than those who reside there. Strong neighborhood associations and neighborhood leaders listen to residents’ concerns and ensure that neighborhood improvement goals are effectively communicated to the City. The neighborhood improvement concept seeks to build this communication system by creating neighborhood leaders and empowering neighborhood associations with the tools they need to work effectively with the community. A strong educational component coupled with an effective outreach strategy will provide community members with the resources they need to be good citizens and stewards.

The City's Neighborhood Development Center (408-277-5350) offers training programs (free-of-charge) for community members that cover topics such as meeting facilitation, public speaking, conducting outreach, and organizing community involvement. Special training sessions may be arranged through the Neighborhood Development Center. Neighborhood association members and aspiring neighborhood leaders are encouraged to attend these training sessions.

Widely distributing information about neighborhood association membership and neighborhood leadership training programs are critical to expanding and strengthening neighborhood associations. An outreach strategy should seek broad-ranging means of distributing information, such as door-to-door, by mail, and through local schools, libraries, daycare centers, churches, clubs, and other community organizations. Materials should be available at local stores and supermarkets as posters and leaflets. Neighborhood leaders could also encourage community involvement and present information about neighborhood associations at community events or meetings of local organizations.



Programs and Services

The concept for enhancing programs and services involves assessing existing programs, establishing new programs and services, improving existing programs in areas of special concern to Burbank/Del Monte residents, and improving access to these programs and services. Community members noted a lack of certain types of programs, inconvenient program locations, and deficient childcare services as constraints to program participation.

The neighborhood goal is to improve access to programs and services that reflect the needs of area residents.

Key strategies for meeting this goal include:

- Conduct an assessment of programs/services currently offered in the Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood;
- Improve programs or establish new programs in areas of special need (such as childcare services, early childhood education, adult literacy, after-school recreation, programs/services for the elderly);
- Explore means of making programs more accessible to those who do not drive or own cars;
- Investigate strategies for acquiring additional space in the neighborhood to accommodate programs and services; and
- Strengthen outreach for existing programs and services.

Programs/Services Assessment

A first step in ensuring that programs and services offered in the Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood most effectively reflect the needs of the immediate community, is to conduct a thorough assessment of programs/services currently available in the vicinity. In addition, a needs assessment to identify what programs and services are desired would help plan for future community facilities by indicating what type of space would be required to support desired programs.

In the Burbank/Del Monte area, community facilities are limited. For this reason, residents are keenly interested in ensuring that

facilities most conveniently located to the neighborhood provide programs that cater to Burbank/Del Monte's diverse population, in terms of ethnic distribution, languages spoken, income levels, and age groups. Community members would especially like to have an assessment conducted with regard to City and City-subtenant programs offered at the Sherman Oaks Community Charter School because there is a sentiment that many programs hosted here do not adequately serve the needs of the immediate neighborhood.

In addition to evaluating how well the types of programs offered in the area reflect Burbank/Del Monte residents' needs and interests, programs should be reviewed for quality of content and caliber of instruction. And, the assessment should also look at potential barriers to program participation, such as lack of childcare or transportation, limited scheduling, funding or program costs, or ineffective outreach.

Areas of Special Need

Burbank/Del Monte residents highlighted a number of broad programmatic needs. As discussed in the previous paragraphs, a comprehensive assessment of programs and services will help determine more precisely what specific improvements could be made so that the types of programs offered would most accurately reflect the needs of Burbank/Del Monte residents.

Community members emphasized the following special interest areas for improved or proposed programs and services.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

- Preschool/Smart-Start, and
- Even-Start Family Literacy Program.

Of particular importance to Burbank/Del Monte residents is the need to provide early childhood education services in the neighborhood. Preschool and Smart-Start (public-private initiative that provides facility funds) would be welcome additions in the area to help young children prepare to enter primary school.



Bilingual education services are also in demand. The *Even Start* family literacy program is a bilingual (English/Spanish) program for low-income families (with children under 8 years of age) that seeks to improve early childhood education/literacy and adult education/literacy. With the appropriate funding and partners, this program, which is administered through school districts, could be offered at local schools. Initial funding for Even Start is provided through federal and state grants, and each program seeks to diversify its funding on an annual basis to include public grants as well as private contributions. Neighborhood Associations, interested community members and the City should collaborate with local school principals and school district administration officials to apply for federal, state, public and private funding.

Sherman Oaks Community Charter School and Luther Burbank Elementary School are the schools most conveniently located to the Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood. These facilities should be examined as possible locations to host early education services. Other neighborhood facilities should also be assessed as potential locations to house these programs.

ADULT EDUCATION/LITERACY

- English as a Second Language (ESL) courses,
- Bilingual programs,
- Citizenship classes; and
- Computer training classes.

Many non-native English speakers expressed interest in refining language skills, becoming citizens, and improving computer literacy to broaden employment opportunities and enhance their quality of life. Expanding language and technology skill-building courses in the Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood will maximize learning potential for residents new to this country.

Some ESL classes are offered nearby at the Sherman Oaks Community Charter School. As discussed under the previous sub-

heading (*Programs/Services Assessment*), a thorough examination could determine more precisely how to better connect Burbank/Del Monte residents with these essential resources.

The *Even Start* family literacy program (further described above under the subheading: *Early Childhood Education*) is valuable for parents in its aim to build the literacy skills of parents in tandem with their children. It uniquely allows parents to learn while playing an active role in their child's education. The program maintains a fully bilingual staff and tailors classes and lesson plans to specific family needs. Seeking funding for the Even Start program and working with local schools to identify sites to accommodate the Even Start program could significantly benefit the Burbank/Del Monte community.

Area residents should also take advantage of the extensive programs open to the public at San José City College.

CHILDCARE SERVICES

- Affordable childcare services.

Residents identified a need for affordable childcare services in the neighborhood. The cost of childcare in Santa Clara County has more than doubled in the last ten years.³ The expense of quality childcare makes it extremely challenging for low-income parents to raise a family, and can also prevent parents from utilizing other beneficial programmatic resources in the neighborhood. For example, some non-English speaking parents pinpointed a specific need for affordable childcare services to be offered in conjunction with English as a Second Language (ESL) courses so that participation in these classes would be more feasible. Strategies for accommodating childcare needs should be explored.



³ Santa Clara County Social Services Agency, *A Chance for Every Child*. San José, CA June, 2000.

AFTER-SCHOOL RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS

- Supervised recreational activities for children and teens,
- Art Programs,
- Music Programs, and
- Theater/Performance Arts Programs.

The Luther Burbank School offers School Age Growth and Enrichment (SAGE) programs, which provide supervised recreation, enrichment activities, as well as educational and cultural programs to elementary and middle school-age youth. The Sherman Oaks Community Charter School houses a LEARNS (Literacy Education Arts Recreation Nurtures Students) center, which also provides some after-school activities.

However, residents highlighted a need for more after-school programs, especially those that offer supervised recreational programs for youth, and those geared toward teen interests. There seems to be a significant deficiency in recreational activities designed for the 13-18 year old age range.

Community members also pointed to art, theater and music as areas of special interest that could be expanded to better serve the neighborhood. Local artists should be encouraged to get involved in art training for local children, as well as adults. Neighborhood leaders and teachers who can share their creative talents with the community should be encouraged to participate in recreational programs.

Employing skilled recreation leaders and inspiring mentors is a priority. Recreation programs should be run by trained professionals to ensure quality, constructive program content. Every effort should be made to provide the most positive experiences for youth.

Involving AmeriCorp, a federal public service organization, or inviting other innovative leaders to get involved in recreation programs could make a positive contribution to youth in the neighborhood.



PROGRAMS/SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY

- Develop extended education programs,
- Art classes, and
- Lunch programs.

While some programs for the elderly are offered at the Sherman Oaks Community Charter School, these are limited in scope and should be diversified to meet the needs of Burbank/Del Monte residents. More extended education and personal enrichment courses should be offered in the neighborhood. As with the interest in expanding arts programs for youth, community members reiterated this interest in developing arts programs for the elderly.

Community members would also like to see the popular lunch program that was once hosted by the Sherman Oaks Community Charter School reinstated to serve the elderly who live in Burbank/Del Monte.



Program Accessibility

Often, a major barrier to community member program participation and personal enrichment is transportation access to programs. Convenient access to these programs is critical in making them meaningful resources to the immediate community. In order to ensure maximum participation, programs need to be held within the Burbank Del/Monte neighborhood whenever possible.

Hosting programs/services at school sites can be helpful in making participation more feasible for parents who travel regularly between home and school sites. However, even programs held within the neighborhood can be difficult to access, especially for those who do not drive, or who do not own cars. For low-income residents who live along routes that are not well-served by public transit, alternative transportation services should be explored. For example, partnering with local taxi companies may provide an opportunity to offer a convenient and affordable transportation alternative.



Residents would like to explore reuse of the Burbank Theater.

Acquire Additional Community Space

The Burbank/Del Monte neighborhood does not have a dedicated neighborhood center, and lacks sufficient space to hold community programs and services.

Local schools house some community programs, and a joint-use agreement between the City and San José City College is being discussed for a multi-use recreation facility/community center at the college. However, these facilities will not meet all of the community's service needs, and strategies for acquiring additional space need to be explored.

Since vacant land is limited, possibilities for land acquisition, relocation of existing businesses and possible joint-use partnerships should be actively pursued to identify potential sites that could accommodate a neighborhood center or other community space (see the Parks and Community Facilities section). Residents are particularly interested in exploring reuse of the Burbank Theater as a community space.

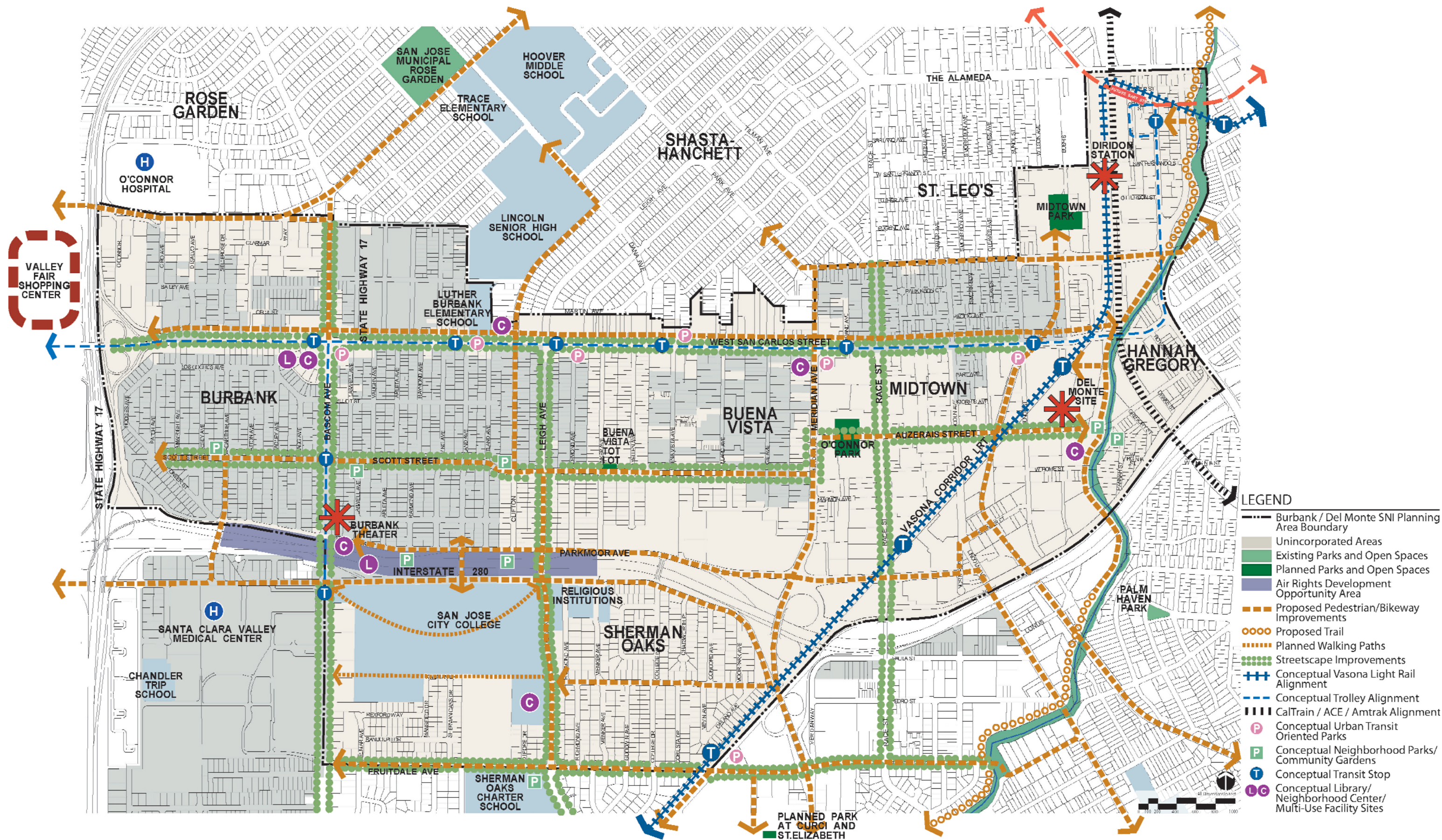
Outreach

Effective outreach is essential in connecting residents to valuable program and service resources in the neighborhood. The Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services recently published the Neighborhood Troubleshooter, a complete bilingual (English/Spanish) guide to San José's many programs and services. This guide describes all programs/services offered throughout the City. Residents can obtain a copy by calling the Neighborhood Development Center at 277-5350. The guide is also available on-line at <http://www.ci.sanjose.ca.us/prns>. An aggressive outreach strategy should be initiated to ensure that the guide is widely distributed.

Burbank/Del Monte residents could also benefit from a more focused program schedule or newsletter pertaining only to services offered in the neighborhood. Many recreational programs are sea-

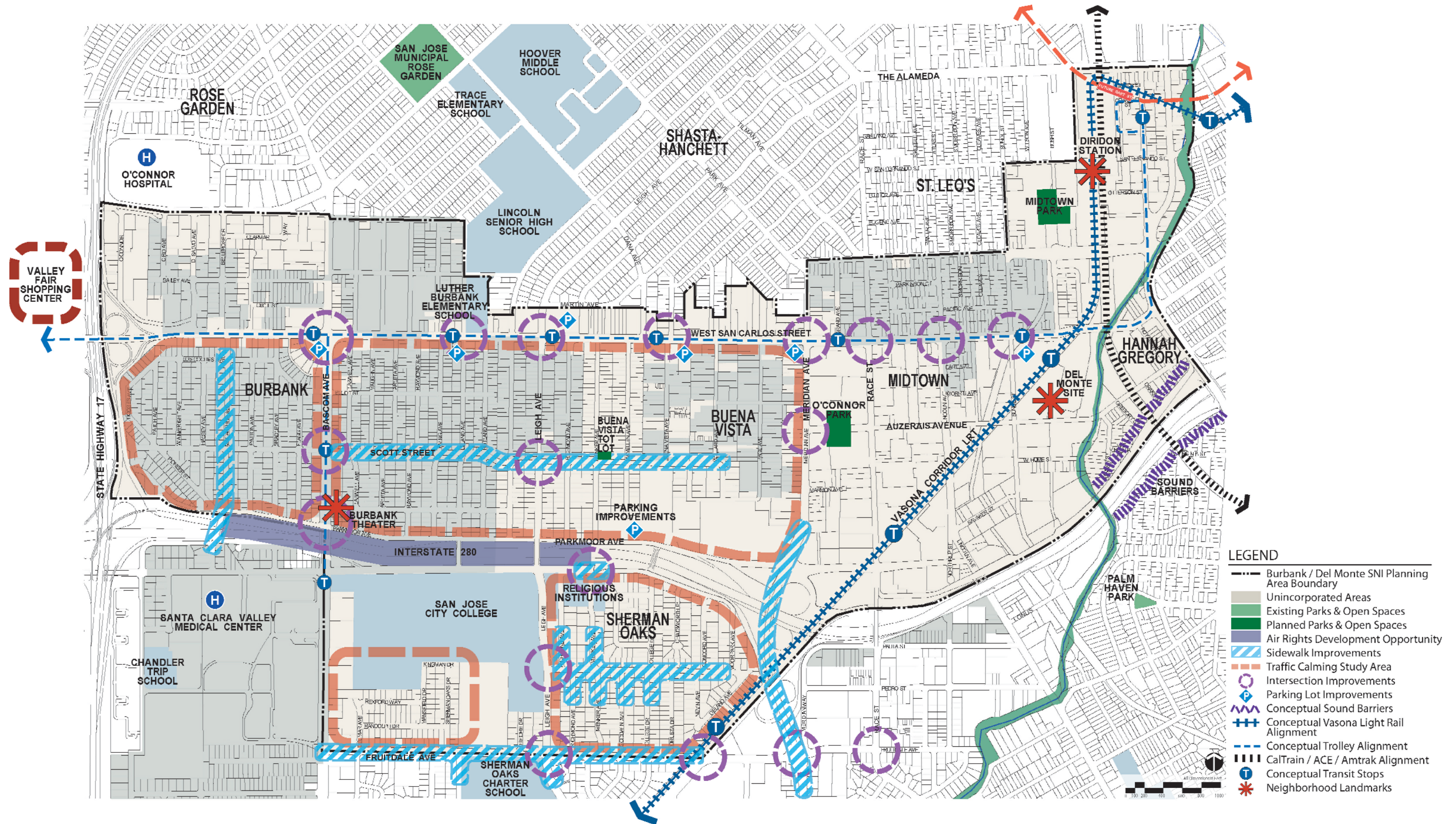
sonal, shifting throughout the year. A newsletter format would be conducive to updating program schedules and announcing new programs. Such a newsletter could also be folded into existing neighborhood association outreach pieces and distributed through neighborhood schools and churches.

Another effective means of disseminating information about local programs and services is to invite City staff and neighborhood leaders to present more detailed descriptions of these services that are available in the neighborhood. Presentations could be made at neighborhood association meetings or other community meetings and events to keep community members abreast of new and ongoing community resources.



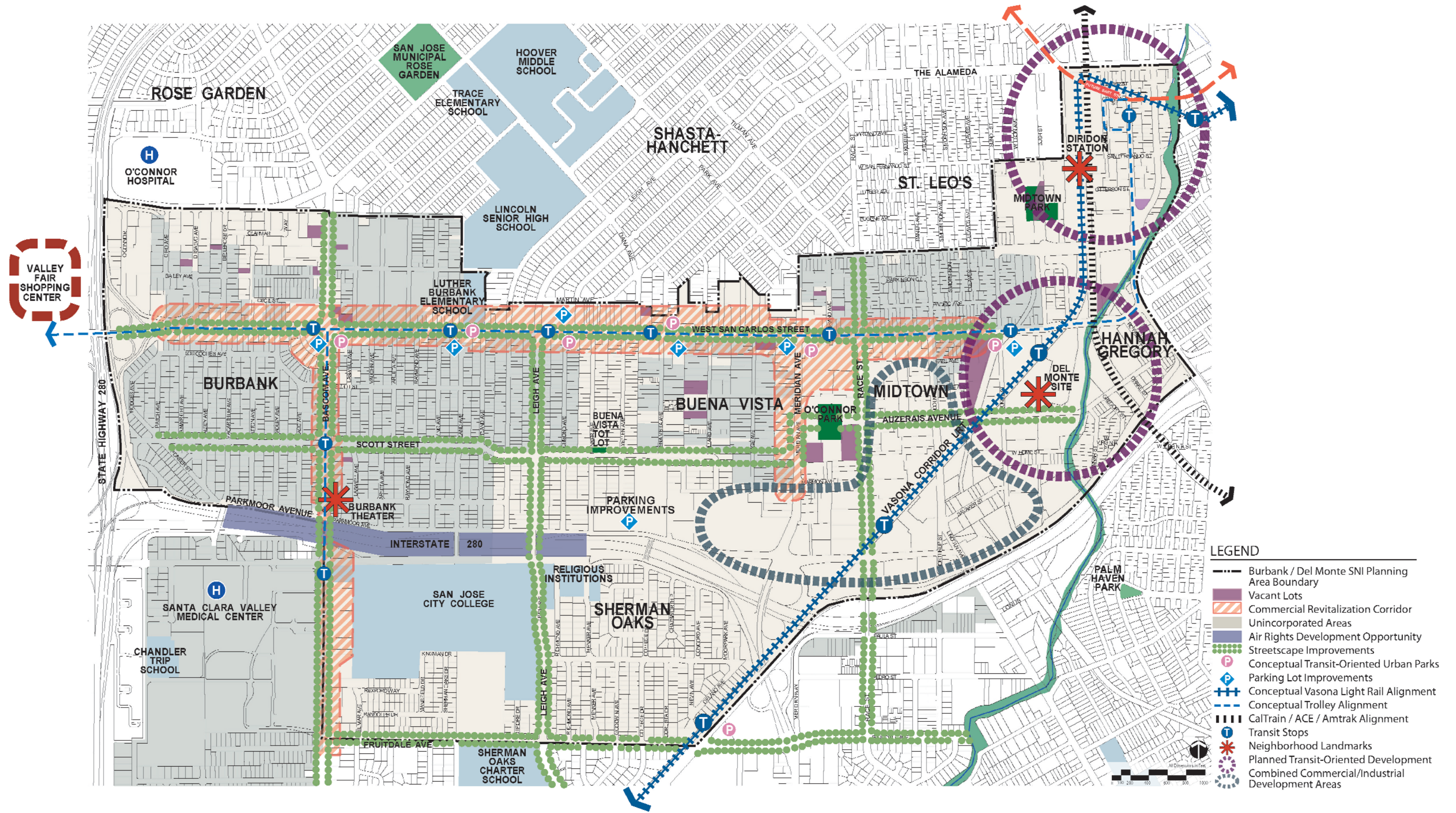
PARKS, COMMUNITY FACILITIES & NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS CONCEPT

Figure 4



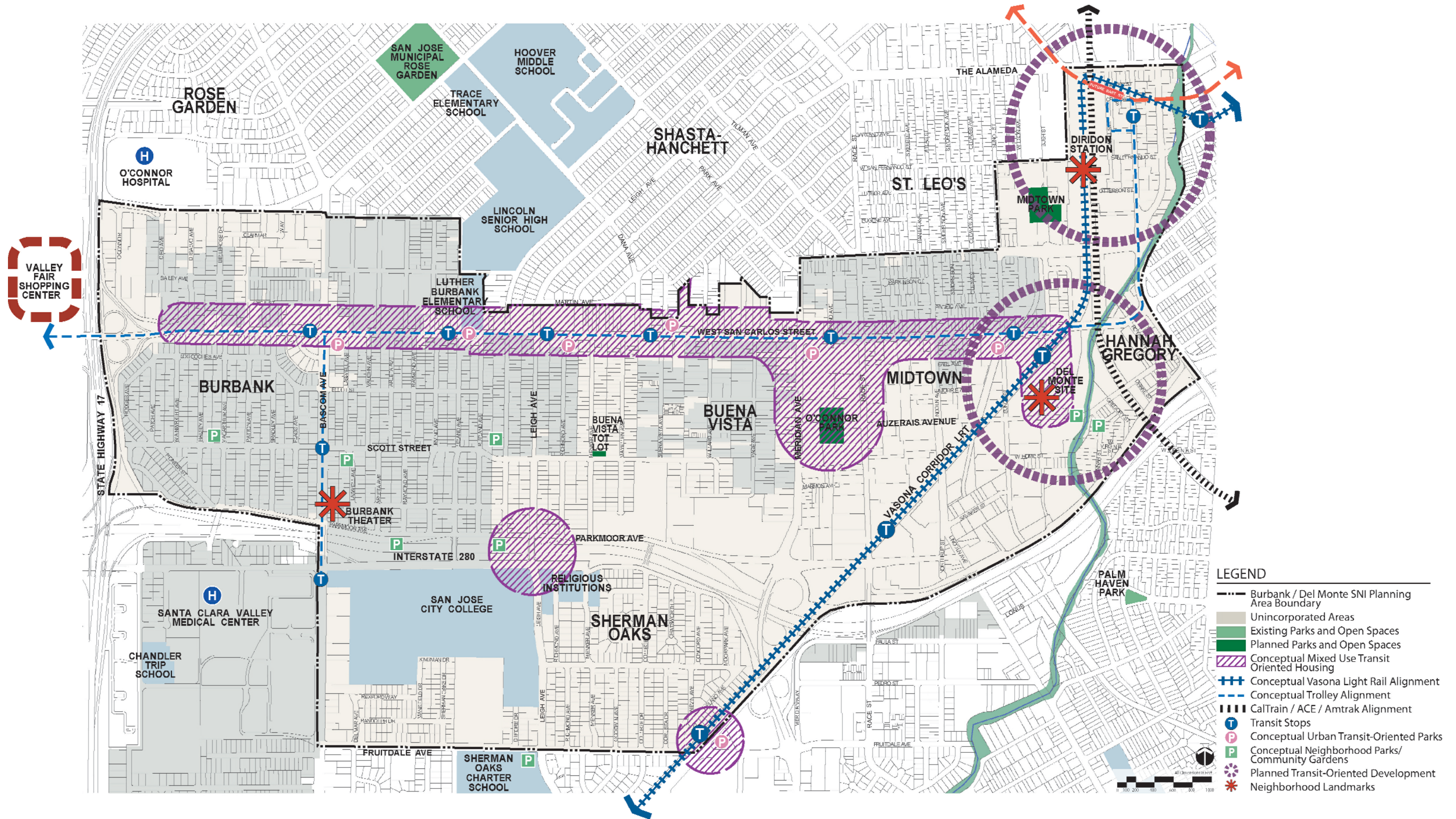
CIRCULATION/TRANSPORTATION CONCEPT

Figure 5



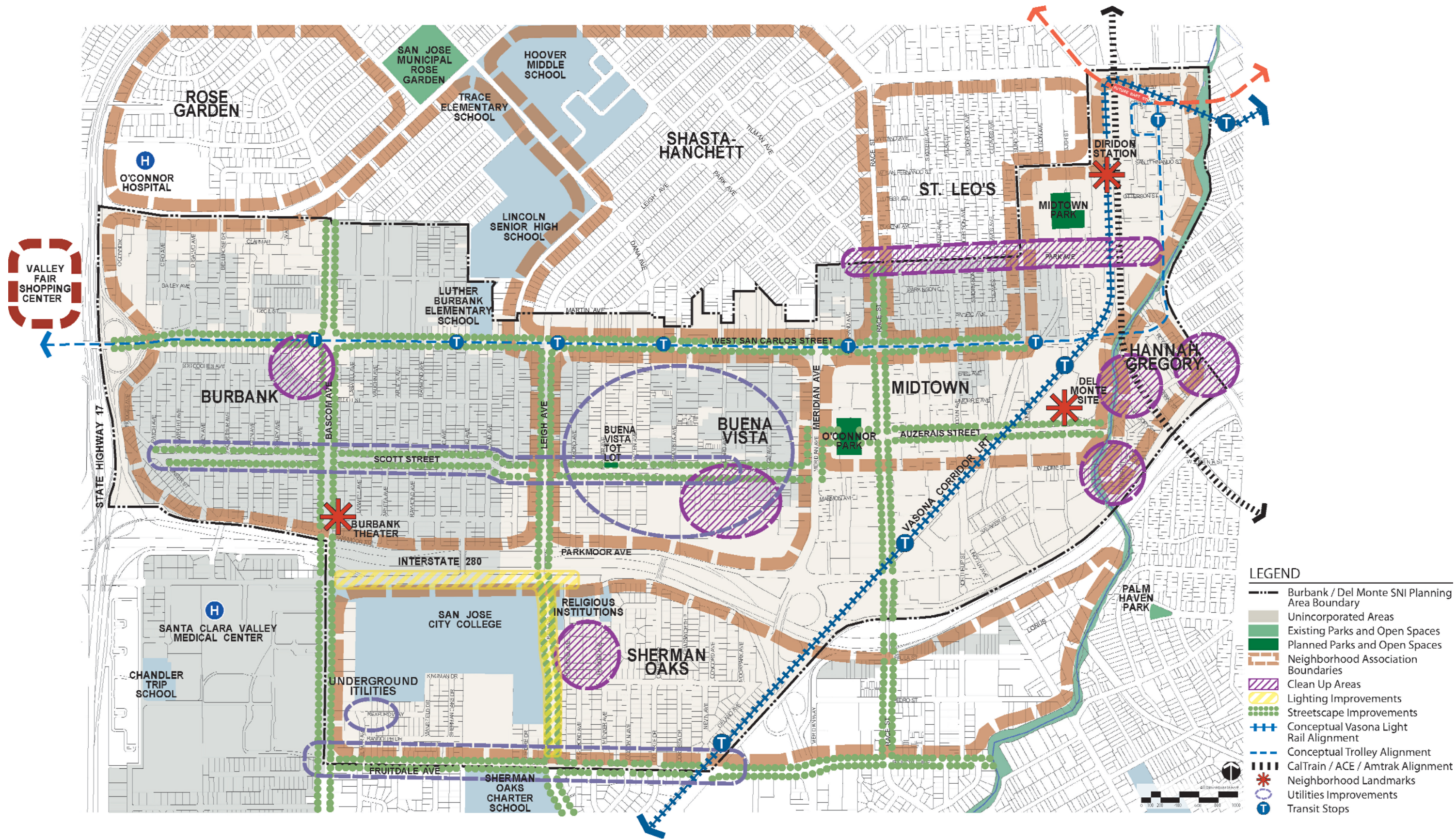
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

Figure 6



HOUSING REVITALIZATION CONCEPT

Figure 7



NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION CONCEPT

Figure 8